



Window on Jordan

By Kerry O'Neill
Star Staff Writer

CROSSING A main road in Amman is like playing Russian Roulette. You're not 100 percent sure that you'll make it to the other side, but you give it a try anyway.

Thousands of cars, buses, Jordanians and tourists all have the same goal in mind—getting from A to B alive, and preferably in one piece. The shouting of

shop-keepers, endless heeping of car horns and screeching of brakes all add to the general feeling of chaos, and anyone choosing to walk on these roads instead of the far safer sidewalks must be mad.

Travellers gaze down at the confusion from their hotel balconies, happy to be safely away from the potential danger below, and bus passengers are glad to be part of the stream of traffic, rather than struggling through the crowds on the sidewalk.

So why does half the population of Amman prefer to walk on the road itself, rather than on the purpose-built sidewalks? There are many reasons. Mai Shawhkeh, a geography teacher from Um Otheina, has a very practical answer. "It's simply easier. Most people are on the roads because they are waiting for a taxi, or because there are too many shops and stalls

Continued on page 2

I think we're gonna make it!



The Star



Le Jourdain
Supplément en français du Star

Retour à la case départ pour l'UNRWA

page 10

Arab Bank establishes Centralized Global Treasury Unit in London

See page 5

Jordan's political, economic and cultural weekly

AMMAN, 11-17 SEPTEMBER 1997, VOLUME 8, NUMBER 16, 350 fils

اسبوعية سياسية مستقلة

Albright to deliver 'stern message' to Arafat, Netanyahu

From agency reports
OCCUPIED JERUSALEM—As she arrived here early Wednesday on her first official visit to the region, US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright was greeted by a Middle East peace process in crisis—its participants angry, its progress stopped dead and its future uncertain.

Her visit comes while the images are still fresh from a bloody attack in which Palestinian suicide bombers killed five Israelis in the heart of Jerusalem last week, and in the wake of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's decision to indefinitely postpone any further Israeli withdrawals from land on the West Bank.

Three days before her arrival, leaders of Jordan, Egypt and the Palestinians Sunday maneuvered for the high ground in talks with Washington, calling on Israel to fulfill its commitments under peace accords with the Palestinians. Israel has unilaterally suspended implementation of the accords in response to what it says are Palestinian failures to crack down on terrorism.

Meeting in Cairo, His Majesty King Hussein, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat issued a statement calling on Israel to refrain from activities that undermine "the spirit of peace" and to carry out its pledges for further troop withdrawals from the West Bank as spelled out in the peace accords.

But the message also was intended for Albright, whose first trip to the region as secretary of state coincides with a deepening crisis in Arab-Israeli relations.

Albright will meet people frustrated, angry and uncooperative on all sides: Israelis because they have been denied the security they had assumed would be a byproduct of peace, and Palestinians because—four years after Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat shook hands on the White House lawn—they are still without either the land or the state for which they have so



MADELEINE S. ALBRIGHT, U.S. Secretary of State

long been fighting. "People are clearly despairing that anything good can come out of this visit," said Jonathan Kuttab, a Palestinian lawyer and activist who was a supporter of the peace process for many years. "We're frustrated and outraged, and we can see now that the peace process has been dead for more than a year."

Into this depressing quagmire steps Albright—onto streets where Jewish crowds are calling for "death to the Arabs" and where even middle-class Palestinians refuse to condemn the suicide bombings.

She will confer with leaders whose trust for one another, tentative even in the best of times, has deteriorated to

nothing. "Lacking a magic formula," editorialized the leftist Israeli newspaper Maariv this week. "Madeleine Albright can hardly be expected to produce a solution."

From all reports, it sounds as though she has no such formula. Albright's plan, aides say now, is to deliver a stern message to both sides. She will chide Arafat, the Palestinian Authority president, for sending mixed messages on terrorism and for failing to act decisively against Hamas, and she will call on him to create a climate in which violence cannot thrive.

At the same time, she will demand that Netanyahu accept his own responsibility for the

Continued on page 2



HARVEST FESTIVAL: Mexican farmers perform the "Danza de la Pluma", which is danced at an annual harvest festival in a hillside amphitheater near Oaxaca City, Mexico. It is believed the dance is part of an ancient Aztec ritual that dates three thousand years back. Los Angeles Times photo by Gary Friedman.

Calls grow for Israel to withdraw from Lebanon

By Rebecca Trounson
OCCUPIED JERUSALEM—

As yet another Israeli soldier was killed Sunday on Lebanese soil, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu sought to halt the growing call for Israel to end its costly occupation of southern Lebanon. The latest death, in a pre-dawn attack on an Israeli army outpost by Lebanese national resistance fighters, hit home in a nation still hailing the victims of last week's triple suicide bombings in central Jerusalem and a disastrous Israeli commando raid in Lebanon.

Four people were killed along with the bombers in Thursday's Jerusalem attack; a few hours later, 12 soldiers died in the hotbed Lebanon operation. As the Israeli cabinet convened to discuss the latest attack and last week's double blow, politicians from across the spectrum—including such longtime hawk cabinet minister Ariel Sharon—called on the government to re-examine the policy that has kept thousands of Israeli troops inside Lebanon.

But Netanyahu tried to quell the growing debate, telling his ministers their "rash" discussion of a unilateral withdrawal from Lebanon could provoke further attacks by Lebanese Hezbollah guerrillas, according to a cabinet statement.



Lebanese soldiers examine Thursday's attack scene

The government insists that Israel must continue to occupy a narrow swath along the Lebanese border to protect northern Israeli communities from cross-border attacks, though the military losses from this operation, especially recently, have far exceeded any harm caused to civilians by rocket attacks or raids.

"I'd be the first to want to leave Lebanon, but I don't want to leave it in such a way that Lebanon follows me into the north of Israel," Netanyahu told Fox television in an interview Sunday.

Still, the push for a Lebanon pull-out is growing—and in

some surprising quarters. Sharon—a hard-line former general who spearheaded Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon with thousands of troops and was forced to resign as defense minister after a massacre in Palestinian refugee camps—suggested in a commentary published Sunday that he might support a withdrawal from Lebanon, even in the absence of a peace agreement with Syria.

Syria, with more than 35,000 troops in Lebanon, is the main power-broker there and is a key backer of Hezbollah. Withdrawal is growing—and in

Continued on page 2

UNRWA revokes decision to impose charges on its services

By Raed Al Abed
Star Staff Writer

AT LAST tension among the 3.5 million Palestinian refugees in Jordan, Syria, Palestine and Lebanon has been eased, since UNRWA announced the cancellation of recent reductions in the Agency's services.

After a week of strikes and sit-ins by refugees, UNRWA Commissioner-General Peter Hansen succeeded in obtaining over \$19 million in new pledges from donor countries for the Agency's regular programs in 1997.

As a result UNRWA is now able to reverse some of the cuts in Agency services which it had been forced to introduce on 19 August.

During a meeting of major donor and host governments held in Amman, Tuesday, only a few donors agreed to give additional funding to cover the organization's \$20 million deficit.

UNRWA had been facing a gap of \$70 million between the budget approved by the UN General Assembly and its estimated 1997 income. Austerity measures had achieved savings of some \$50 million, but around \$20 million remained unfunded as of mid-August.

This situation had forced the Agency to announce a series of emergency measures, including a review of school charges, a freeze on the recruitment of 249 additional teachers needed Agency-wide to cope with the growth in the student population, and a 15 percent reduction in international staff.

The continuation of the Agency's position of university scholarships, and a freeze in hospital reimbursements and referrals for November and December 1997 were also affected.

Mr Hansen announced that the decision to impose school charges on Palestine refugee pupils attending UNRWA schools and the freeze in hos-

pital reimbursements and referrals would be lifted.

Measures still in force include a 15 percent reduction in international staff. The recruitment of additional teachers into normal staff positions will also remain frozen.



Peter Hansen

"The situation facing the Agency remains critical," Mr Hansen said. "The new pledges announced at Tuesday's meeting were directed at the specific \$20 million gap which had prompted the emergency measures. Even that gap was not completely closed."

However, UNRWA is still dealing with a deficit of \$50 million this year and the outlook for the "next" two years is not at all clear," Mr Hansen emphasized.

The new pledges eased the worst pressure in UNRWA. "We will survive this year, but we cannot afford to relax," Mr Hansen added.

During a meeting with representatives of UNRWA staff and the refugee community, Mr Hansen confirmed that UNRWA is getting the same income but demand is growing and the population is increasing.

He conveyed to delegates the concerns expressed to him about the repercussions of the measures which had been announced by the Agency in Au-

Continued on page 2

INSIDE



- Palestinian art in focus, page 6
- Of fairy tales and unending sagas, page 4
- Weekend, Diana, the last day, page 11

The lessons of Mother Teresa

Debunking a myth of goodness always has its uses, one of the chief uses being that you don't have to look at yourself, your own failings, quite as closely. So there were those who wished to tear her down

By Paul Hendrickson
WASHINGTON—All of last week the world has heard the word "humanitarian." It's

been connected to a ravishingly beautiful woman who died too young and too terribly. But last Friday, the word "humanitarian" took a deeper slice at our psyches.

A wrinkly, bent, 4-foot-11, 87-year-old, globally admired holy woman died in Calcutta. Her name was Mother Teresa. She died of heart ailments and malaria and simple old age.

Mother Teresa: As with Princess Diana, though not for the same reasons, her name came to have an amazing and mythic quality. You could say it in practically any corner of the globe, and people knew instantly whom you meant. It was a name that stood overwhelmingly for good works. It was a name that came to be so much larger than the name itself.

She was an enduring symbol of the idea of selflessness in a society that seems to be in a crazed sprint to self-obsession. Just having her there, in our world and in our imagination, was a kind of stay against the demons of pettiness, pride, all kinds of casual cruelty.

She showed us that we could be our better selves. That sounds almost quaint, certainly not cool, though it happens to be true. Mother Teresa, canonized "saint of the Indian gutters," Mother Teresa, humankind's wizened little Catholic missionary nun, the one in the coarse white habit and blue-bordered head-dress who wished only to go about helping the poor and the

despised little by little. Say the name, her name, and you see the prayer-tipped hands. She is howling, holding heads, grinning. Is it the grin of the serenely knowing?

As open as she was, there was always a distance. Perhaps one of the things that make her so difficult to comprehend in a secular world is that she was always and ever an old-fashioned Catholic. Meaning that she understood, as it says in the Bible, that the poor we shall always have with us. The poor can redeem us. The poor can show us the way. The poor can make us blessed.

Continued on page 3



Riding the buses in southern Jordan

By Kerry O'Neill

Special to The Star
HEADING TO Aqaba recently for "Operation: Spend Birthday on Beach", everything seemed as smooth as the surface of the inviting Red Sea on a peculiarly calm day. But there's one thing I forgot. Not my passport or bikini, but the fact that I was in Jordan. And trips without "chickens" in Jordan are about as common as a cheap bottle of water in Petra.

Finally escaping the scary gentleman who'd followed me from Downtown to Wahadat bus station made the four-hour trip to Aqaba quite relaxing, until the guidebook mentioned that tankers sometimes "lose control and explode" on the Desert Highway. Fantastic!

Safely in Aqaba, I immediately bumped into Firna, a friend from Amman. She rescued me from potential loneliness, and I rescued her from a shopkeeper who'd passed the "Special price...you like to drink tea?" stage and was practising his "So what are doing tonight?" technique.

At Petra Hotel, a "cheap n' cheerful" place in central Aqaba, the host somehow managed to find us a room without windows, balcony or sea-view. Well, what did we expect for two dinars? Waking up to bird-song from the pet-shop outside was better than car horns, anyway.

Thursday night was spent enjoying hummus, salad, spicy feta, fried

auhergine and chicken "spleens" (apparently) in Al-Shami Restaurant, sharing our mountain of food with the amused locals. The souvenir and book shops displayed many Arabic cookery books, so now friends at home can enjoy the delights of "chicken spleens a-la-Aqaba" too. Bet they can't wait.

Wanting "The Perfect Sun" as a birthday present, Friday was spent snorkelling (choking to death) and sunbathing (acquiring third degree burns) at the Royal Diving centre. Warnings saying "Don't waste water, you are in a desert" reminded you of Jordan's water situation, but seemed out of place next to the pool and the sea. That evening, after a refreshing fruit cocktail at a colorful juice stand, we met some friendly Jordanians who accompanied us via Gelato Uno (mmmm!) to the Al-Cazar Hotel Bar. "Happy-hour" involved pizza and a beer, with an optional game of pool. The bar was relatively quiet so, exhausted from the snorkelling, we decided to have an early night.

Too much sun plus not enough sunbathing, equals no birthday on beach. A Plan "B" was needed. Being optimistic (unrealistic) tourists, an afternoon at Dana Nature Reserve before taking the King's Highway to Amman via Kerak and Wadi Al Mujib in time for a birthday party at 7pm sounded ideal, and within our time limit, it all looked so close on the map.

Two long bus journeys brought us to Qadiseyyah via Ma'an, nearly three hours later, at 2pm. Now, there are two roads from Qadiseyyah to Dana. "Good Road" for locals, and "Half-built Scenic Route" for us tourists who, supposedly, like breathtaking views. The driver and school children found our screams hilarious. "What do you mean you want to live to see another birthday?"

Dana is a peaceful village with panoramic views over Wadi Dana and Arisha, but confused us. Where was the working village, where local handicrafts are made and sold? Up at the RSCN reserve complex, kilometres away. We were disappointed and had no time or transport to reach the complex. With the impression that more co-operation between Dana village and the RSCN wouldn't go amiss, we left at 4pm to be in Amman for 7pm. *Bi'ahlanima*. Or in English: In our dreams.

There were few buses, and our budget didn't involve taxi prices, so we hitched to neighbouring Tafila then onto "yes" village, just missing the last bus to Amman. Whilst waiting at the Kerak-Amman junction for cars, the police arrived and, despite my explanation about the buses, took us back to Tafila. They promptly disappeared, telling us to wait "one minute". Thirty "one-minute" later, it was dark, we were worried and the party in Amman was going on without us.



On the road again

A crowd of curious shopkeepers was gathering (if there were so many of them) just drive us home?!) who kept repeating "Fish Bus." Fish bus, chicken bus, any bus, we weren't fussy. Alas, in Arabic that means "No bus". On the verge of hitting someone or tears, I pulled out my unimpressive journalist credentials, while my friend produced some UN identification, saying we were heading to Amman for a highly important mission. Yeah, a birthday party.

It worked, for five minutes later at 7pm, they had convinced a kind man in a flashy car to take us to Kerak. "Really, we'd love to meet your family, just not

right now." To Kerak, time was more important than money, so we extravagantly "bought" the empty bus seats and sped to Amman. Unfortunately it was too dark to see the Castle, or Wadi Al Mujib. Maybe next time.

Relaxing over our long drinks in Amman's "Fish Pub" as midnight struck that night, we were finally able to laugh about the whole fiasco. With more time, organization and buses, we could have enjoyed the beautiful south of Jordan infinitely more. But six hours in seven different vehicles to spend two hours in a deserted village? One birthday a year is quite enough! ■

Albright to deliver 'stern message'

Continued from page 1

deterioration of the process, and she will insist that Israel live up to its commitments to withdraw from occupied territory. She will make clear that the expansion of Jewish settlements in and near Palestinian neighborhoods—such as the new neighborhood being built at Jabal Abu Ghneim in occupied East Jerusalem, which sparked the downward spiral of the peace process in March—are an unnecessary, unhelpful provocation.

Brushing aside demands to focus exclusively on terrorism, and Israel's troubled security situation, Albright said she will urge Israelis and Palestinians to shoulder "mutual responsibility" for restarting the stalled peace process. Talking to reporters aboard her aircraft en route, Albright said both Israel and the Palestinians must keep the pledges they made in the 1993 peace accord negotiated in Oslo, Norway, and signed on the White House lawn.

"Oslo has been—and is—a very important process," Albright said.

In an apparent effort to show she means business, Albright

reportedly refused personal invitations to dine or socialize with either Netanyahu or Arafat, and will instead take her case directly to the people, speaking before Israeli schoolchildren in Jerusalem and Palestinian schoolchildren in the West Bank city of Ramallah.

She also will visit wounded Israelis in the hospital and visit the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial to learn more about the death of her own Jewish relatives. After two days in Israel, she will move on to Syria, Egypt, Jordan and the Gulf.

When all is said and done, it is not clear whether Albright's harsh words and symbolic gestures—indeed that is all she is bringing with her—will be any more effective than all the other harsh words and symbols of recent months. Or perhaps, at the last moment, she'll pull a promising new initiative or a face-saving compromise out of her pocket.

Either way, many observers believe the time for action was months ago. Former US Assistant Secretary of State Robert Pelletreau argues, for instance, that Albright, who has been in office since January, stayed away from the Middle East for too long. While Netanyahu was being pushed to the right by his cabinet and his traditional political base, there was no US counterpressure to keep him on the road to peace.

Another subject that may be broached during Albright's visit is Israel's peace negotiations with Syria, which were broken off in May 1996. Israel Radio reported Tuesday that a top Netanyahu foreign policy adviser, Uzi Arad, had held "secret talks" in Europe over night focused on restarting the negotiations.

Observers here caution that despite the pessimism, the peace process has a dynamic of its own—and despite repeated rumors of its demise, it has over the past four years withstood riots and assassinations among other things.

For both Arafat and Netanyahu, they said, there is still much to be gained by moving forward, if they can do so without losing face in the eyes of their constituents. And if the push to restart the process is to come from anywhere, virtually everyone agrees it will come from the United States. ■

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

UNRWA revokes decision to impose charges on its services

Continued from page 1

gust, and circulated copies of petitions received by UNRWA in recent days protesting against cuts in the Agency's services.

Minister calms press fears

MINISTER OF State for Information Affairs Dr Samir Motaweh said there is no intention on the part of the government to shut down the weekly press, confirming that revoking licences or closing down newspapers is not on the agenda. "We are not even thinking about it," he was quoted as saying by *Al Arab Al Yum* daily.

"We only asked some newspapers for their balance sheets which we believe are important to prove that the weeklies have readjusted their situation," Motaweh said. He denied rumours about a government decision to close down some weeklies.

Last Tuesday weekly newspapers representatives held a meeting at the Jordanian Press Association headquarters, and decided to release a memo to explain their stance towards the Press and Publication temporary Law. ■

"The drop in your support to UNRWA will increase the frustration of the refugees where ever they are, and will make the desired peace and stability in the region impossible to achieve." This is a petition that was presented to the donor countries' officials. "The situation in the region may explode once again," it stressed.

Speaking on behalf of the representatives, Mr Mohammad Al Mohaisen said that "It is a moral obligation of the donor countries to meet their commitments towards Palestinian refugees."

UNRWA, however, maintains some of the measures imposed on 19 August. The Commissioner-General said that the Agency would continue to provide scholarship subsidies for existing recipients. Under current funding projections, however, it would only be possible to finance new scholarships if special additional funding was secured.

"We will consider in detail how we can best meet the challenge of providing quality education for the refugee school pupils now and in the future," Mr Hansen said.

During the meeting, the Japanese Government announced that its annual pledge of about \$12.6 million for 1997, including a substantial proportion for



Palestinian women refugees hold a set-in outside the UNRWA headquarters in Amman, Tuesday

(Photo by Yannick Laine)

UNRWA's regular budget, would be paid before the end of this year, rather than early in 1998 in accordance with the Japanese fiscal year. Japan also announced its intention to provide additional amounts for the special needs of Palestine refugees in Lebanon and for food aid in 1997.

The United States, UNRWA's largest single cash donor country, announced \$7.5 million in additional funds for the Agency in 1997, including \$1.5 million for emergency assistance in Lebanon. The Netherlands and Germany each pledged about \$1 million, and Italy pledged about \$0.9 million. Spain pledged about

\$500,000. Luxembourg announced that it would consider pledging an additional amount in the next few weeks.

UNRWA's major donors and host governments were called to discuss the Agency's draft 1998-1999 budget to be presented to the United Nations General Assembly later this year. Mr Hansen told delegates at the meeting that a financially crippled UNRWA would be a negative political factor for the region. "The costs of restoring our operations, should they be suspended or canceled, would vastly outweigh the modest sums the Agency needs," Mr Hansen said. ■

NMC seeks to provide another thunderous scholastic year

THE NATIONAL Music Conservatory (NMC/Noor Al Hussein Foundation) is one of the national Jordanian institutions that has contributed to the cultural life of Jordan by rendering a unique musical experience. Since its formation in 1986, the NMC has developed a specialized music educational system to enable students to study any orchestral instrument. These include Arab musical instruments, piano, guitar and a number of supplementary courses that aim to enrich the musical character of the student.

This internationally accredited educational system is supervised by highly qualified Jordanian, Arab and foreign faculty members holding high degrees from some of the most prestigious academies around the world. The instructors, who are experienced in the fields of performance and teaching, make the NMC musical system prestigious for either amateurs or professional student musicians.

Since it was established, the NMC has given special attention to collaborating with Arab

and international music bodies. On the Arab level, the NMC enjoys strong ties with the Arab League's Academy of Music, having organized its functions there for a number of years—the NMC Director is the Vice President of the Academy.

Internationally, the NMC became the local representative of the Examinations of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music in 1991, enabling students to receive certificates that are accredited worldwide.

In 1993, the NMC signed an agreement with France's Conservatoire de Région de Bourgogne, Blagnac. According to the agreement, the two conservatories would cooperate in the field of music education. It provides NMC students with the opportunity to sit for the examinations at the French Conservatory. Students would receive a diploma similar to that given by the French Conservatory.

The NMC has graduated a number of students who finished the pre-college level and are currently at the College

level. In addition, students were sent to resume their higher music education abroad. Lara Jammal was the first to be sent to resume her violin studies in France. Eyad Al Awadi is currently studying composition at the Bela Russia Music Academy. This year, Karma Elias will start higher violin studies at Trinity College in Britain, and Malak Taher will soon receive her Bachelor's from the Welsh Academy of Music and Fine Arts.

The NMC has established a number of groups that allow students to practice their specialized instrument beside peers and instructors. Each of these ensembles are available in three formations according to ability, be that preparatory, advanced or professional. These groups include the Orchestra, Wind Ensemble, Choir and Arab Music Ensemble, all of which are part of the NMC.

The new scholastic year will begin with an extension programme that allows all those interested in studying the instrument of choice on a limited hourly basis. ■

Jay walking

Continued from page 1

lining the sidewalk.

Local taxi drivers waiting at the roadside in Abdlil don't even appear to view the matter now the implications for road safety as a problem, with one saying "No, I don't think there are any accident statistics on the matter. It's not a crime to walk on the road, is it?" In some countries yes it is, but in Jordan apparently not. Which is probably a good thing, because the police wouldn't have time to do anything else but arrest hundreds of so-called "jay walkers" daily, making

their prison cells full to breaking point with this new type of "harmless" law-breaker.

Tourists seem to have different reasons again for taking their chances amongst the beeping, speeding vehicles on the roads. Ruth Jones, a visitor from Paris who has had some "unpleasant experiences" with male pedestrians, says "I'd rather risk being squashed in the tide of motorized traffic than in the sea of pedestrians; I feel safer." Another, Sean Michaels from England, says "I often find myself walking next to the cars, because I cross the road through a gap in the rail-

ings, and can't find a gap the other side." For travellers with legs aching from exploring Jordan's many castle ruins, another reason for jay-walking is the thought of the "kerb-stones", frequently as much as 0.4 meters high. "If I wanted to climb over old stones, I would have stayed in Petra!" commented one exhausted Japanese woman.

So, the busy sidewalk shops, the masses of people rushing in all directions and the fact that no-one seems to care are all working together to create a situation where, soon, no-one will use the sidewalks at all, as they'll all be in the middle of the road. And where will that leave the cars? Your guess is as good as mine. ■

Calls grow for Israel to withdraw from Lebanon

Continued from page 1

ing in the daily Yedioth Ahsarot, Sharon said the government has two options: To use its air force for increased attacks in Lebanon or "to withdraw from southern Lebanon on the basis of our own decision and timetable... without any political negotiation between ourselves and Syria."

Foreign Minister David Levy also called for a "thorough assessment" of the situation in Lebanon and several cabinet ministers asked for a special session to discuss the matter. Meanwhile, encouraged by a poll showing that more than half of Israelis support the idea of a unilateral withdrawal from Lebanon, opposition Labor party legislator Yossi Beilin announced this weekend that he will form a political movement to urge an immediate pull-out.

One natural constituency is likely to be the mothers of Israeli soldiers in Lebanon, many of whom have come out publicly in recent months in favor of such a withdrawal. "More and more people are beginning to understand that we cannot go on like this," Beilin said.

But not all members of the Israeli left support the idea, any more than the Israeli right uniformly opposes it. Yossi Sarid, leader of the leftist Meretz Party, on Sunday repeated his rejection of the idea of a unilateral pull-out. Given Syria's key role in Lebanon, Sarid said, Israel must reach a peace agreement with the Damascus government before calling its soldiers home.

Israel's occupation of southern Lebanon was based on the idea that control of the border area was crucial to protect civilians in northern Israel from attack. The nine-mile-wide strip, which Israel describes as its security zone, was established in 1985 when the majority of Israel's troops pulled back across the border. But many are growing impa-

tient with the mounting toll in Lebanon, with commentators increasingly comparing Israel's role there with that of the United States in Vietnam. With the suicide bombings in pedestrian malls and vegetable markets in Jerusalem, the losses in Lebanon have left Israelis feeling depressed and vulnerable, their confidence shaken in the ability of the Israeli military and security forces to protect residents near the border and in Israel's largest cities.

"It is as though Israel has lost its magic touch," columnist Hemi Shalev wrote Sunday in the daily Maariv newspaper. "We have become a kind of King Midas in reverse, whose touch ruins everything."

So far this year, 30 Israeli soldiers have been killed across the border, and 73 others died in the crash of two Lebanon-bound helicopters in February. ■

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JORDAN

W E E K



An unconventional report on Jordanian news and views edited by Marwan Al Asmar

Havel to visit Jordan

President of the Czech Republic Vaclav Havel and his spouse will start a three-day visit to Jordan on 20 September. They are coming at the invitation of Their Majesties King Hussein and Queen Noor. Mr Havel is also visiting Lebanon, the Palestine National Authority areas and Israel and is heading a large delegation of businessmen.



National Islamic coalition

Is there a way out for Islamists who want to boycott the elections? Well, there could be. A new National Islamic Party for Reform (NIPRC) is hurriedly being set up. According to the party's spokesman, Mr Majid Abd Al Karim Al Nasr, the coalition will include independent Islamists and members of other parties who are poised to boycott the November elections. He said these members wish to run on an independent ticket irrespective of their parties. Already he is suggesting that his party will field up to 40 candidates. But could the NIPRC be a way out for those in the Islamic Action Front who think they should participate in the coming elections? People like Bassam Al Umoush and Abdallah Al Akalieh are sticking with the boycott decision, but press reports say that they might run independently. They are of course denying it, but anything could happen.

Party says it won't run for elections

The five parties who previously said they would participate in the elections on certain conditions have now become four. Officials in the Democratic Popular Unity Party said that it has drawn the "conditionality aspect" and will not participate in the November parliamentary elections after all. General Secretary of the party Dr Saeed Thiyah said that the government has effectively closed the door on dialogue and created an "unhealthy atmosphere." The four remaining parties who are still holding ranks are: The Arab Ba'ath Socialist Party, The Arab Ba'ath Progressive Party, The Jordan Communist Party and the Arab Land Party.

Hamas leader arrested

Security forces have detained the Hamas spokesman in Jordan, Mr Ibrahim Goshah. Minister of State for Information Affairs Dr Samir Mutaweh said the arrest of Goshah was made following his remarks saying that Hamas will continue the armed struggle so long as there are Palestinian prisoners held in Israeli jails. It was earlier thought that the arrest of Goshah was directly related to pressure being put on Jordan by the PNA and Israel to crack down on the organization in this country. However Dr Mutaweh denied that suggestion, saying that "Jordan is a sovereign state which does not act under foreign pressure." Goshah's arrest has caused consternation. Muslim Brotherhood Overseer Abdel Majid Thuneibat has already contacted Dr Jawad Al Anani, the deputy prime minister for development. He in turn promised that Goshah will be released. Earlier, Dr Mutaweh said that Goshah has made statements which go beyond the bounds and commitments of the Jordanian law under which he has been given permission to stay in the country. However, Dr Mutaweh said that Goshah, who is being questioned, will be freed soon.

Gas cylinders

Between 180,000 and 200,000 gas cylinders should be destroyed, according to the Jordan Petroleum Refinery Co., which has already sent a memorandum to the government requesting them to take action on the matter. The Ministerial Development Committee in the Prime Ministry is still studying the issue and it is hoped that a decision will be made at its next meeting, which is due to take place shortly. The Petroleum company already takes out of the market about 10,000 gas cylinders every year. A source at the Ministry of Energy urged consumers not to buy gas cylinders that look worn out.

Between the anvil and the hammer

The Abu Obeida neighborhood, north of the Baqa Camp, has very few services. This is because it isn't under the jurisdiction of any municipality. Consequently the 50 families who live in the neighborhood have no electricity, drainage or telephone services. They can't even get planning permission, as they have no authority to apply to. Its people recently appealed to the Abu Nusair Municipality to take them under its wing as it were, but the request was rejected. The Services Committee of the Baqa Camp said it wouldn't take Abu Obeida under its control either, as it is outside the city limits. However, rumor has it that the real reason for Abu Obeida's difficulties is because there are five large dairy farms in the neighborhood with 300 heads of cattle, giving out a stench and attracting flies to the area.

Train stops for a month

Service trains of the Jordan Hijazi Line Co. have stopped carrying goods and passengers between Amman, Mafrq, Dima and vice versa. A tunnel is being built under the Army Street in Zerna, which goes directly under the rail road. The train stoppage will last for a month. This action will not affect trains from Amman, Jazira and Qatrah.

Scientific venue starts this week

THE FIFTH annual Jordanian Science Week will start its activities between 15-18th September, under the title "Enhancing Jordanian Competitiveness" in the fields of "Enhancing productivity, transparency and accountability." The event, which is jointly organized by the Royal Scientific Society and the general secretariat of the Higher Council for Science and Technology, will be opened under the patronage of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan. The activities of the week will be preceded by a round table meeting to discuss ways of dealing with the notion of administrative sluggishness, with examples taken from the Canadian experience. The working papers will include suggested mechanisms to guarantee success in curtailing the size of government institutions, enhancing performance efficiency.



His Majesty King Hussein, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat discuss efforts to salvage the peace process. Sunday. After a meeting held at Kubbeh Palace, Cairo, they issued a joint communique calling on Israel to abide by peace commitments and honour previous agreements. The trilateral summit defined a way to save the peace process, stressing that all parties involved must be committed to fighting terrorism. They reiterated the need to combine efforts to settle a just and comprehensive peace in the region, urging Israel not to take any unilateral measures or actions that will negatively affect the course of peace, including building settlements, confiscating Palestinian lands, imposing collective sanctions on Palestinians and Israeli attempts to determine the fate of Jerusalem outside the final status negotiations. The three leaders called on all parties to resume intensified peace talks on the Syrian and Lebanese fronts.

Diplomats need greater media skills, argue experts

By Ebtisam Al Awadat
Star Staff Writer

GLOBAL MASS communication and its effects on international diplomacy came under the spotlight this week.

Under the Patronage of His Highness Prince Hassan, a conference titled "Communication and Diplomacy: New Horizons in the Information Age" was held in Amman. It was organized by the Institute of Diplomacy and the Yarmouk University's Journalism Department in cooperation with the Arab and United States Association for Communication Educators (AUSACE).

The participants were experts in the fields of communication and the mass media, coming from Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, Britain and the United States.

Dr Mustafa Al Masmoudi, ex-minister of information in Tunisia, says the conference discussed important issues especially those relating to diplomatic work and the media. It highlighted new techniques for diplomats in use when dealing with the media.

The importance of this conference, continues Al Masmoudi, is in the focus it gives to studies for making a career diplomat. Over 40 working papers were presented during the three-day conference.

Al Masmoudi adds that there are three important points that should be realized from this event: Firstly, a diplomat must be aware of the current important issues around him such as globalization and economic agreements like the GATT. It is important for the diplomat to know the current economic laws, its articles and its implications.

Dr Masmoudi says the second point is to make sure that diplomats have "legal specialism" in various fields, the legal aspects of the media being only one of them. In this respect, the diplomat must have an extensive cultural background to help him deal with laws about these subjects in the countries in which he works.

The final point Dr Masmoudi points out is that a diplomat must acquire all the essential media skills. In a television



A picture from the first day of the conference

interview for instance, he must choose his words carefully to be able to have a greater impact on the audience.

When we talk about globalization adds Dr Mustafa, we must not forget about the Internet as it's a comprehensive channel that diplomats must utilize fully.

He thought that Prince Hassan's suggestion of forming a committee to deal with the issues and recommendations provided by the conference was very useful.

While Dr Masmoudi supports freedom of expression, he says "there must be morals to judge the whole operation." In a clear reference to the tragic death of Princess Diana, he adds "I am all for journalistic freedom, but won't be satisfied if the lens of photographer watches me 24 hours a day. I don't want this."

He adds that Princess Diana is not the first and won't be the last. Today, the media and television in particular, have become very effective tools. Society is becoming totally dependent on the media.

"Now we depend on television and the Internet and any cut in these, means isolation from the world." But, the for-

mer Information Minister points out, we must keep on our guards.

"As Arabs we have our own culture, values and environment and every society has its own specificity. We must deal with other civilizations without isolation but also without becoming buried in their history."

Dr Hussein Al Sheemi, first officer in the Media Department of the Arabic League says that there is a central administration for media matters. As far as the Arab League is concerned the media and press are very important tools to relay information to try and understand the negative and positive responses to the issues that concern Arab World.

On press freedom, Dr Al Sheemi adds that "no one can restrict others...we must look to freedom as a gift but without exaggerating its use against others." He adds that Islam as a religion is careful to keep the secrets from the people.

He said that the conference even with its many studies won't be enough for experts and specialists. For him, what is important are issues that need to be discussed and analyzed.

But it will be useful when we get to know its directions and the issues they discuss and analyze. "It doesn't matter who participates in the conference. The important thing is what benefits you get."

Dr Sheemi has written and translated many books on the media. His last book, *Information and Critical Thinking*, is now in print and focuses on how to think, criticize and analyze without taking information as a fact.

Former Jordan Television news presenter Ghaleb Al-Hadidi, who is now responsible for development and training at Jordan Radio, says that "the conference was excellent, the subjects and studies were very important," and has a futuristic outlook concerning the means of communication, broader horizons and technologies.

"The participants and organization were of a high calibre, but the presence of the media [local] wasn't sufficient. They could have transmitted the sessions on satellites to provide a chance for participation of others outside Jordan, but time wasn't sufficient for experts to discuss their papers, which required at least one week."

P C

Edited by Raed Al Abed

Teaching Christianity

The government decision to allow the teaching of Christian religion in [public] schools is not based on logic, Bassam Al Umoush wrote in *Al-Hudud* weekly.

The controversial decision has created much debate in the country.

Dr Al Umoush, former Lower House deputy of the Islamic bloc, refers to the government decision as a "political complement" pointing out that it is a pressure tool under the banner of pluralism and religious freedom.

However, he states "We Muslims believe in 'no coercion in religion' and believe in the 'magnanimous existence' of Muslims and the people of the Book, Christians and Jews. Our Islamic teachings also say that 'non-Muslims must enjoy Muslim protection'."



Dr Al Umoush explained that both Muslims and Christians live in Jordan under a model of benevolent existence, with no offence being made.

He added that Christians are practicing their religion in churches, and on different occasions which confirm their identity without interference from anybody. He maintained that even the Jordanian media and press provide space for Christian events. Accordingly, Al Umoush stressed, we do not feel that Christians are oppressed and do not feel that they are suffering in ease their pain.

Consequently, Al Umoush believes that the idea of teaching Christianity in public schools is not proper, "not because we reject such education but because it provokes sectarianism among the new generations that are living in peace."

He said why not teach all students Islamic education, but exempt Christians from exams?

Or, he added, maintain the previous situation of allowing Christian teachings in churches.

I believe that the decision is dangerous and was not based on careful consideration.

Political conferencing and language

In her weekly column in *Al-Dustour* daily, Ms. Toujan Faisal said that in international conferences where the first, second and third worlds meet, one finds that the differences in the political language used, are much wider than the differences in the languages themselves. "Understanding each others' language does not mean that you do not need a long time for explanation," Faisal wrote.

In the first world where democracy is more entrenched, parliament and government, rulers and opposition are "one and united." Despite the differences in form, "you do not find real differences in positions, since the interests are one, those of the country's, and the country is to all."

She added that but for representatives from the third world in these conferences, the only people who comply with their states and governments are those who come from dictatorships, who "do not know the taste of color of democracy."

The rest, she added, came from countries which have just started the democratic struggle. They have a tough mission in these conferences and in their countries because democratic institutions are not complete. They always have to do the duties that absent institutions should do, and also to confront other institutions and individuals on the other side.

She stresses that the tragedy of the absence of democracy is not limited to the loss of internal rights and freedoms, but it makes us lose out in the international arena, forcing us to act with surprise why they did not eliminate us from the political map altogether.

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(Newspaper: North Korea's representative at the U.N. has been hospitalized in New York for the last 3 weeks, accumulated \$50,000 in unpaid bills, but has no medical insurance or financial support from his impoverished government.)

Our Say...

Albright's visit: A bit too late?

FOUR YEARS ago, this week, Yasser Arafat and Yitzhak Rabin, flanked by an elated President Clinton, shook hands in front of a public gathering at the White House lawn marking a historic agreement between Israel and the Palestinians to end Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza.

On Wednesday, US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright began her much awaited visit to the region in a bid to save the little that remains of that agreement. But in order to achieve her goal, Mrs Albright will have to demonstrate to all parties, particularly the Palestinians, that the US remains committed to a balanced peace process with the aim of achieving a just and lasting peace based on UN resolutions and the formula of the exchange of land for peace.

Restoring US credibility will decide whether Mrs Albright will succeed in rescuing the process it created and maintained over the last years.

This will prove tough, especially as the US initiative comes almost in the last and final hour when the parties have lost all trust in each other and when facts on the ground appear to be leading the parties more on the way to confrontation rather than reconciliation.

At the heart of the peace process today is the trilateral—Israel, the Palestinians and the US—commitment to the Oslo accords. It is obvious now that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is adamant on taking unilateral measures to suspend implementation of these accords. But whether Netanyahu likes it or not, the Oslo accords are all we have today of the peace process.

Mrs Albright began her trip to Israel with emphasis on Israel's security. That is a good start as long as security means regional security, including that of the Palestinians, the Lebanese, the Syrians and the Jordanians. And as long as security is indispensable from the peace agreements that were agreed upon after years of negotiations.

But to treat security as an Israeli concern only, Mrs Albright would be giving Netanyahu the ammunition he needs to disengage totally from his commitments to the Palestinians. Today he is suspending the bilateral agreements with the Palestinians in the name of security.

The deterioration in the peace process to the current desperate state did not happen overnight. Likewise, the rise of militancy among the Palestinians cannot be separated from the Israeli policies of collective punishment, land expropriation, Judaization of Jerusalem, expansion of settlements among others. Such policies, and violation of agreements, have created a feeling of insecurity among the Palestinians. Will Mrs Albright address Palestinian security concerns with Israel as well?

While the peace process was slowly unraveling, the United States was gradually disengaging itself from its responsibilities as an honest broker and a major sponsor of this process. It took Mrs Albright nine months to make up her mind and finally come to the region. We will soon know if she was too late in making her visit.

● Pupils from Al Shatei Camp in Gaza doing their homework near their school that is run by UNRWA last week. The UN organization is to start charging school fees, something the created widespread demonstrations throughout the Palestinian Occupied Territories. (See related story on front page relating to UNRWA).



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Notes from the Levant

Of fairy tales and never ending sagas

By Osama El-Sherif

LIKE THE rest of the world, we were not immune against the hypnotic fascination, mixed with sorrow

Princess Di



and grief, with the events accompanying the tragic death of Diana, Princess of Wales, and her Arab friend Dodi Al Fayed, in a Paris tunnel early last week. For a brief moment Arab media gave way to the deluge of news and features about the circumstances surrounding Diana's sudden demise, her unique character and the captivating charm she had over millions of people everywhere—and of course her regal funeral and the emotional farewell Britons gave her on Saturday.

Arabs watched, like billions of others all over the globe, the sea of humanity: millions of mourners somber and grief-stricken, as they lined up the streets of London to have a last glimpse of Diana's coffin as it threaded its final journey to Westminster Abbey and from there to the princess's final resting place in her family's ancient estate.

What kind of spell did Diana have over all of us? Her death and funeral became the only items on many international news bulletins.

There was a feeling of loss everywhere. Diana, her short but eventful life as the most controversial member of the House of Windsor, and tragic death, became the quintessential romantic tale in a very unromantic world: a world obsessed with power struggle, economic competition, death and war, famine and genocide.

For a brief period of time, the departing Diana was able to overcome the many barriers that separate us from ourselves and from everybody else. There was a universal unity in grief, in the creation of an icon, and finally of an enigma.

This short-lived and awe-inspiring attachment by people everywhere to one major event was unique indeed in today's complicated and news-conscious world. But now that affinity is over and the mundane, but overwhelming, issues that make up our daily lives are back on the agenda—an agenda that differs from one country to the other, from

one people to the other and from one corner of the globe to the other.

Our brief, sad and romantic escape from the dogmatic issues of everyday life had come to an abrupt end. With Diana, Dodi and their tragic love all dead and buried, with the young and beautiful princess, queen of people's hearts, the English rose, the fairy tale made its own fateful conclusion.

Somehow all of us played a part in writing the final chapter of this unhappy tale of love, treachery, charity and devotion. But that was it. The dead heroes of this romantic fable have been glorified forever—with time turning into saints and legendary figures, while the living continue with their diverse lives having all shared for a moment in authoring the its melancholic ending.

Here in the Middle East, our attention was soon grabbed by the suicide bombings in Jerusalem and the botched commando raid by Israel into South Lebanon in which 12 Israeli soldiers were killed. The peace process was in trouble again as US Secretary of State Mrs Albright prepared for a rescue mission. Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu was himself under siege this time, with calls for his resignation and for an unconditional Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon on the rise.

Again it was difficult to imagine how things will turn out for the Palestinians and their fragile agreements with their occupiers. There was no romance here, no fairy tales to write or share in their writing. The bitter reality of occupation, of collective punishment and blind obsession with power and land are the only constant elements to an on going saga that defies an epilogue.

The hiatus in our regular media coverage was welcomed, although the temporary alternative to the usual coverage was Diana's grievous journey into becoming a legend.

But now, for us, the living, it is business as usual.

Princess and the publicity

By Jon Katz

HOW TO make sense of the death of Princess Diana? Why did it shake the world and seem to lay bare the scary heart of modern media and its power to shape our world?

The death of the young, especially the rich, glamorous, or beautiful ones, always touches a deep nerve in our culture.

Editors and producers call what we've seen in the past few days the Kennedy Syndrome—the freezing in the public mind of a glamorous figure before he or she can grow old or be undone.

The assassination of John Kennedy was such a shock that its immediate coverage legitimized television broadcasting. The death of Elvis Presley spawned the tabloid culture.

It isn't yet clear how the death of Diana, Princess of Wales will alter information distribution. But a story this big almost surely will.

Princess Diana has been widely portrayed as a fatality of the celebrity-information culture, but her relationship with the media was more complicated. She was, one of its sources of nourishment.

She was not a person of particular accomplishment. She wasn't elected to anything, didn't create great art, won't be remembered for her ground-breaking research.

Yet within hours of her death, she was elevated to a kind of cultural sainthood—her story became not the tragedy of a privileged person who has experienced extraordinary ups and downs but a kind of contemporary Joan of Arc legend.

She is the innocent young idealist, brutalized by arrogant royals, bravely standing up to them, and selflessly turning her life over to the plight of the needy, who is then murdered by greedy and insatiable journalists.

The coverage of this wealthy young woman, both a master manipulator of mass media and its victim, took her out of this world and into another.

The coverage turned into a worshipful madism. Hours after her death, CNN had gone to funeral music and black-bordered graphics, referring to her as the "People's Princess." Barbara Walters was fighting back tears describing her humor and pluck, in a two-hour special hosted by ABC News anchor Peter Jennings.

Dan Rather promised emotionally that CBS News would provide the world's best coverage of this tragedy. Newsweek, which last week portrayed Diana's new boyfriend as a hapless and bumbling dummy, rushed out a special edition

two days later.

And guess which tabloid wrote this: "The end of her loveless marriage guaranteed that she would never be Queen of England. But she had earned a title no one could contest: Princess of the world."

No, not the Star, but Time magazine.

Stricken admirers all over the world talked about her being the first royal to touch a person with AIDS and about her campaign to eliminate land mines. That photograph of her in the protective helmet walking near minefields in Bosnia was broadcast countless times.

It was as if, having made her image loom so large, the information machine then had to scramble to make her life big enough to fill it. The process was frightening in its power. It became the opposite of anything like journalism. Good deeds became godlike.

The only thing stranger than this spectacle was the inevitable

weekend was one of the most significant events to occur in recent history.

It wasn't.

And these are surely the same people who will be introducing stories that puzzle over why the values of the young are inverted or cynical, and why they are disinterested in so-called "serious" news.

Celebrity journalism is unsavory under normal circumstances, but it's rare for the phenomenon to literally kill someone. And it's far from clear that the photographers chasing the late Princess of Wales were responsible for her death. Diana's history with the media was complex—filled with ambivalence and mutual exploitation. She used publishing and broadcast journalism relentlessly to wage a successful—and extremely profitable—public campaign against her hapless ex-husband.

She waged an equally successful campaign to transform her public image from a prep-

culture and its bastard cousins, the tabloid TV shows and magazines. They are among its modern architects, using it when they need to and condemning it when they don't want it around.

Diana seemed to revel in the attention as much as she sometimes hated it. While this doesn't give anybody the right to stalk her on a motorcycle, it clouds the moral issues.

That Diana was perhaps the most famous and recognizable image on the earth when she died is stunning in itself, perhaps the big, if sublimated, news in the tragedy. It speaks much about modern values, media, the absence of real and worthy heroes, and the epidemic spread of information technology, as well as the moral bankruptcy of our time. There seems to be a giant black hole at the center of our collective value system, which we fill with the most photogenic—but not necessarily the most worthy or inspiring—people.

Princess Di was an image more than anything else—an intersection of celebrity, glamor, beauty, and privilege—the image transmitted with indescribable relentlessness by the powerful new transmission and reception machinery of the information age.

If TV liked John Kennedy, it absolutely worshipped Diana, reveling in her good looks, humor, fashion sense, and adroit media skills. And there is now more TV, transmitting more pictures more quickly to more parts of the world on more channels than ever before. TV is still the undisputed champ of the information world, the engine that drives almost every other part, including the pap-

raza. We can now expect days of talk shows filled with journalistic windbags gassing over the ethics of paparazzi and tabloid journalism, as if the celebrity phenomenon were something confined to a handful of irresponsible trash mongers rather than the bread and butter of almost all contemporary mainstream journalism, print and broadcast, from ABC News to The New Yorker, Newsweek, Time, OZ, and the National Enquirer.

The death of Diana and the coverage that's resulted so far reminds us that celebrity in the information age means something new, something immense, disturbing and, so far, uncontrollable. It also reminds us again—that the press is an unsparring mirror, and that technology is amoral, without a value system any more substantial or meaningful than that of the people who consume it.

Wired

Middle East Beat

by Khairi Jaud

Peace rescue

THE TRILATERAL

meeting in Egypt, between His Majesty King Hussein, President Mubarak and Mr Arafat, is certainly come at the right time, namely before Ms Albright's visit to the region. Coordinating positions and continuing consultations between the three Arab leaders, perhaps the way to ensure an Arab trilateral, directly involved in the peace process and reliant in essence on the Arab perspective at large.

This nucleus of leadership having direct contact with Israel, may yet prove the best focus for presenting Arab demands and the Arab position in the struggle to rescue the peace process in the area. The meeting was convened at a time when the same Arab leaders were individually involved in diplomatic efforts to steer the peace process away from the path of violence.

His Majesty King Hussein has been intensifying all efforts to bridge the gap between Palestinian and Israeli sides, and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan has called upon Moscow to resume its role as co-sponsor of the peace process, utilizing its good relations with all sides in order to rejuvenate the image of the ailing process.

The Crown Prince reminded the international community in Moscow that moral support and investment in the peace process is likely to keep it afloat, and producing tangible benefits. The coordination between the three Arab leaders is a clear indication of the centrality of the Palestinian peace track for all concerned. It forms a new entity, working to benefit the whole Arab-Israeli peace process.

Some sources have doomed Ms Albright's visit to failure, while others are withholding judgement. Top of the agenda will obviously be the security issue. Jordan's position as stated by His Majesty the King, links land to peace, and political processes to security concerns.

In Israel, a shift in Likud policy is required at this critical stage. Universally condemned terrorism has become a potent weapon in the hands of anti-peace and anti-co-existence factions, and has yet again proved to be uncontrollable by military and security measures alone.

Winning the hearts and minds of the people is an old method practiced by those in counter-terrorism, and controlling by fear, whether psychological or active has proved to be a failure since the Roman era. A dangerous development, which the Israeli government must not nurture, is military adventurism.

The commando raid into Lebanon and its consequences, highlight the futility of using violent methods to solve an endemic crisis. One hopes that threats to intervene in PNA areas were merely made in the heat of the moment, as there is no place for adventurism in the sanity of the peace process.

The visit of Ms Albright in the current circumstances shows USA's clear commitment to the peace process. It keeps the window of hope open for all, enabling the best possible scenarios for furthering the process to be developed. The point which must not be forgotten is the whole argument is, this fact that Israel's neighbors are Arabs, and at the end of the day, any Israeli government will have to deal with its geographical neighbors. Therefore, if Mr Netanyahu concentrates solely on pleasing the Americans with little or no regard for his Arab neighbors, the outcome desired by everyone is likely to be severely delayed.

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11 SEPTEMBER 1997

B U S I N E S S

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Business scene

■ For the fourth consecutive year, Jordan is taking part in the conference and show organized by the American Travel and Tours Agents' Association in Glasgow, Scotland. The Jordanian delegation is headed by Minister of Tourism, Aqel Beltaji. The event which continues till 13 September, is a good opportunity to market Jordanian touristic sites and focus on development in touristic services available in the Kingdom. American tourists who visited Jordan last year was 86,000.

■ Japan approved a grant of \$2.1 million to finance the purchase of agricultural equipment, fertilizers and tractors for the Ministry of Agriculture. The grant will be used to support the supply of basic foodstuffs in Jordan such as wheat, lentils, potato and legumes.

This is the first Japanese donation of its kind given by Japan to Jordan. Total grants donated by Japan to increase basic foodstuffs in the country reached \$20 million.

■ The Customs Dept. has recorded 8165 cases of smuggling and tax evasion. Total fines amounted to JD1,169,928. Of the total, 950 cases were recorded in Amman, 1011 in the Zerqa Free Zone, 761 in Ramtha, 1183 in Aqaba, 1841 in Atawari borders, and 455 in the Airport.

■ The Arab Investment and International Trade Co., has won one of the highest Jordanian contracts to export soap to Iraq. This is in the light of the second phase of the oil for food deal. By the end of this year, the company will export 5300 tons of soap at a value of \$4.6 million. The mid-annual results of the company showed a net profit of JD 63,000.

Attracting foreign investments needs strong local base, industrialist says

By Itham Sadeq
Star Staff Writer

SOME INVESTORS argue that our national industry is still unable to compete with outside products, especially in terms of quality. Nonetheless, there are many businesspeople who stress that we do indeed have the potential to match other producers. They are optimistic that local manufacturers can create a sound base for a real industrial rejuvenation in the kingdom if they manage to face challenges and follow-up with the latest technological requirements to improve their quality.

However, profitability of any product depends to a large extent on its price, its buyer's purchasing power and the inevitable relationship between supply and demand.

"Efforts should be made to improve the financial status of our companies and to concentrate on promoting sales on the local market," says Ahmed Al-Nammari, general manager of Woolen Industries Co.

Looking forward to increasing exports or even operating on a strategy to find new markets for our products is seen by Al-Nammari as a secondary objective.

The focus should be on ensuring the needs of the local market and maintaining it before thinking of exports.

This doesn't imply that we are to isolate ourselves from the world. "Maintaining the local market and establishing good channels with local consumers goes hand in hand with attempts to find out new markets," adds Al-Nammari.

The company has taken part in exhibitions organized alongside the EU partnership meetings in Athens, Lebanon, Yemen and is "going to participate in a show in Tunis, and study the possibility of exporting to Sudan and Syria."

As for the Woolen Industries Co., Al-Nammari tells The Star that in 1996 the company was able to reinforce its position on the local market by cutting prices to get rid of a large

stockpile of goods from the previous year. His company specializes in manufacturing woolen products, mainly blankets, as "concentrating on one kind of product is more profitable," Al-Nammari says.

The company, which was established in 1961 at a capital of JD 250,000, is now able to cover domestic needs and has managed to raise its capital to JD 1 million.

While sales in 1995 recorded a decline of JD 57,000 to reach JD 741,000, last year they went up to JD 1,207 million, a rise of 63%. Out of 87,000 blankets produced in 1996, 84,000 were sold, showing how this company's wise strategic planning has managed to reduce its stock stored in warehouses.

The company imports the acrylic yarns from Spain and the output passes through various stages of manufacture from weaving the blankets and softening the tissue to become of a high quality, attractively coloured product that reaches the shelf.

However, Al-Nammari adds that the company is now buying snow locally made woolen yarns, and that their quality is relatively similar to that of the imported ones. This step has been taken to encourage national producers.

Referring to problems facing the industrial sector in Jordan, Al-Nammari says that these can be summed up in three areas:

■ The high interest rate.
■ Reduction of customs duties on imports which makes imported products cheaper and increases consumer demand.
■ Taxes and customs fees imposed on inputs.

As an investor, Al-Nammari says, "It's better for those who call for encouraging foreign investments to give priority to enhancing local projects, to maintain their existence."

Foreign investors are now encouraged to come to Jordan after the cancellation of the 50 percent ceiling on ownership. But Al-Nammari says that foreign investors focus on either the service sector or on buying shares in strategic companies such as phosphates and mining, in which sector foreign ownership is still restricted to 50 percent.

Al-Nammari stresses that it's better to enhance local investments and build a sound base for our national economy. "It's only then that we can create an attractive environment for Arab and foreign investors."

Al-Nammari says that we encourage investors and agree to

provide them with all facilities they need. He adds that though confusing red-tape could be reduced, some bureaucratic measures are a must. Any approval of foreign investment should consider certain restrictions such as health and environmental issues, and feasibility studies. "Yes, doors have to be open for investors, but to a certain extent. A free economy doesn't mean cancellation of all legislations and measures."

It is also imperative, he says, to boost joint Arab ventures to help establish a common Arab market before we enter international flows. "Getting into talks to join the Euro-partnership and the WTO is still incompatible," he says.

As the world opens its doors to goods, expertise and technology, priority should be given to the strengthening of inter-Arab blocs prior to integration into the international economy.

Referring to the strategy



Al-Nammari

of privatization of public institutions as a step towards globalization, the analyst says that "the private sector already exists but needs improvement and reorganization," pointing out that there is no need to privatize some public sector institutions.

BritishBank accepts donations for Princess of Wales Memorial Fund

BRITISHBANK ANNOUNCED that for the convenience of individuals, it will accept private donations on behalf



of "The Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund." Donations will be forwarded collectively and free of charge to Kensington Palace at the end of each month. Cheques, which should be marked for the account of, "BritishBank: The Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund," may be mailed or presented personally to any of the Bank's branches or deposited at any BritishBank ATM. Cash donations will also be accepted. This facility will be available until the end of February 1998.

For more information please contact Ewan Stirling, Manager Personal Banking Tel. 607471 Ext. 301

Business Chron

Arab Bank leads upward trend on AFM

SHARE DEALINGS at the Amman Financial Market (AFM) have recorded their highest level since 1993. This was led by the shares of the Arab Bank.

The Arab Bank, seen as a major institution in the economy and considered as one of the top ranking in the Arab world, has created an unprecedented leap for the AFM.

In only one week, the Bank's share, which represents about 40 percent of the total stocks in the financial market, rose by JD 31 to close at JD 326.14 on days ago. As a result, the official index closed at 172.6 points, recording a rise of eight points in one week. Accordingly, the bank's index rose 17.74 points, the most significant increase in the last four years.

Observers expect Arab Bank shares to continue rising to exceed the P/E ratio (price per earning), which is now 13.5 percent. This is an attractive rate compared with P/E 17 percent for other local banks.

As of last Saturday, the Arab Bank share price made a new jump to JD 341. But after a six-day increase it stabilized at JD 336. Traded shares in the banking sector reached 458,000, out of which 2440 were for the Arab Bank. Hence the banking sector index recorded a rise of 22.6 points, with the AFM index closing at 174.45 points. Such increases have positively affected trading in the whole banking sector. The bank's index closed at 237.3 points, the highest figure since 1992.

Analysts say the sharp increase in the market, and the Arab Bank share in particular, is due to the latest measures (effective as of this month) to remove restrictions on foreign ownership in some economic sectors (excluding trade, contracting and mining). Arab investors, mainly from the Gulf, are now willing to buy shares in Jordanian financial institutions.

Gulf investors have already bought 21,000 shares in the Arab Bank, totalling JD 6 million.

Other analysts such as economist Fahad Al-Fanek say that the increased demand for Arab Bank shares could have resulted from the decision made by its board of directors to distribute a share bonus for its shareholders after the Bank doubled its capital from JD 44 million to JD 88 million.

Omar Al-Masri, an analyst in the Atlas Investment Group stressed the heavy weight of the Arab Bank share on the AFM and expected such performance to have a positive effect on all share dealings in the market.

Statistics indicate that share trading is expected to see a further rise. This is encouraged by the recently formed Securities Committee, which is now in charge of introducing measures to guarantee greater security for investors. The committee's role is to reorganize the securities market, introducing legislation to protect investors from fraud.

Observers are enthusiastic that the performance of this committee as well as cancelling the ceiling on foreign ownership, and the amended Companies' and Securities' Laws, will bear fruit. Such an upward trend, led by the Arab Bank, is seen as the launch of a new era in the market's history and ends a mood of economic sluggishness on the AFM since 1993. The market is on the threshold of a prosperous phase which will certainly cast its shadow over other sectors' shares being traded in the market.

Such performance will be directly reflected on other sectors, mainly banking. This will enhance investors' confidence in the market and encourage them to pump their capital into leading banking institutions as well as industrial ones.

Meeting of Arab Bank Global Asset Liability Management Committee

Centralized Global Treasury Unit to be established in London



AMMAN (Star)—The First meeting of the Arab Bank Global Asset Liability Management Committee was convened in Paris on 29 August, 1997.

The meeting, presided over by the Chairman, Mr Abdel Majid Shoman, the President Mr Khalid Shoman, and the Deputy President Mr Abdel Hamid Shoman, was attended by 20 top executives from Head Office and the main financial centers in Paris, London, New York, Manama and Singapore, along with the managers and board members of the Bank's wholly-owned and sister institutions in Germany, Austria and Switzerland.

The objective of this strategic meeting was to fine tune the Bank's Global Risk Management

Plan and to address the developments in the banking industry especially those related to the management of interest rates, foreign exchange risks and the new derivative products available in the market.

To achieve these goals the Global Asset Liability Management Committee has decided to establish a centralized Global Treasury Unit in London.

The Unit will be linked on a real time, on-line basis with the Arab Bank 21 centers through its main regional centers in Europe, North America, South East Asia,

and the Middle East.

The Group Treasurer, assisted by sophisticated Risk Management Systems, will be undertaking stress tests on the Bank's consolidated Balance Sheet in addition to the main function of optimizing the use of the Bank's funds, lines and limits in order to have a streamlined treasury operation.

The meeting came in line with the Arab Bank's continuous efforts to manage its assets and liabilities in a professional manner.

It will be followed by a four-day Asset Liabil-

ity Management seminar to be held this week in Amman. The seminar which is the second in a series of this year, will be held exclusively for Arab Bank regional managers in cooperation with Batt and Partners Consulting Ltd., a specialized top level consulting firm serving financial institutions worldwide.

The 30 attendants will represent Arab Bank branches in Spain, Italy, Greece, Cyprus, Bahrain, Yemen, UAE, Qatar, Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan and Palestine.

Arab Bank continued its steady growth during the first half of this year. The total Balance Sheet stood at USD 21 billion, with total deposits and shareholders equity reaching USD 14 billion and USD 1.4 billion respectively.

Lurie's New



Arab students at Horizon Cultural Center

Bahraini and Qatari students, with their certificates, after completing a summer course at the Horizon Cultural Center. It involved language instruction, computer skills and art training. As part of their course, the students were also taken to the Al Haya Cultural center and shown around the museum and planetarium.



Palestinian group exhibition

Dreaming through art

By Hala Shaker
Special to The Star

Art can depict dreams. "After all man has the right to dream, despite the bitter reality, which must sometime alter, and the dream must sometime be fulfilled," writes Princess Wijdan Al, president of the Royal Society of Fine Arts. This was said as a welcome to the group exhibition "Palestine, the Reality and the Dream" that is being held at the National Gallery in Amman.

All four artists participating, says Princess Wijdan, made significant achievements in the Palestinian plastic art movement through their long experience and expressive methods. It is about a destined reality which entails renewal, adaptation and challenge. Each of the artists, she adds, expressively depicts this new-old reality, enriching international and Arab art.

Despite the circumstances of "removal" and the "scattering" abroad under which the Palestinian art lives and suffers, this movement has blossomed in the heart of tragedy, and moulding all the extraordinary talents in one form which clings to the dilemma of the Palestinian people. This exhibition is a living example of this blossoming and challenge.

The works of Ismail Shamout are direct representations of Palestinian life and people. He says "I deal with the issue of man through dealing with the problems of Palestinians."

Through his 20 exhibited works, the Palestinian is depicted as sometimes weary, other times hopeful, rebellious and a martyr. In his works, we can also perceive the Palestinian woman as a symbol of hope and a birth of a future dream. She is loyal to the dream of return and in being united with the land of Palestine.

Shamout makes us hear the melody of love of Palestinians for their homeland as if they have never left from there. His works, which are full of the bitterness of the reality and the beauty of dreams, address the Palestinians tenderly in adhering to their land. This is depicted in the painting that he names "Contemplation" showing a Palestinian mother whose eyes are fixed on the dream of return and whose arms are holding tightly her little son who represents her future and the land of Palestine.

The style of Tamam Al Akhal is about diversity but in a unified theme. Realism, expressionism and abstraction are all employed to reveal professionalism and depth of meaning.

The Arab horse, the symbol of power and pride and the Islamic arches are there in her paintings reflecting her own identity. She is after depicting noble goals, the ones that take the human being as a focus, refusing every injustice, and opening the horizons of hope and beauty.

In her "The Heritage", what attracts the attention, is the challenging eyes of the child of the stones carrying a body of a martyr. Despite the smallness of this child his feet remain firmly rooted in his homeland. In other three paintings Al Akhal depicts the poor and narrow life in the Palestinian refugee camps. These places show the fatigue and dreariness as if people beings desperately wanting to get out of their miserable existence.

Abd Alhadi on the other hand, deals with the dilemma of the Palestinians through his suggestive geometric shapes and excessive abstraction from a different perspective. Expressionism, the reflection of the bitter reality and the spoiled land, can be seen through some of his 19 exhibited works. Despite this agonizing state his spirit still seeks return.

Samih Al Qasbi, the famous Palestinian poet says "Abd Alhadi has continued his creativity in a complete framework of adhesion between man, art, life, dream, and between what is being and what should be, despite all the disappointments which infected on him and us."

The works of Ibrahim Hazima carry a very special vision. His stream-like lines and shapes reflect the connection between the woman, mother and wife and between the village, which is a fundamental topic in his drawings. But Hazima's works are reminiscent of the peaceful mother homeland before being infected with struggle and distress. War is absent as if it has never been here. Open windows, women under the clear sky empty of the smell of guns powder, wedding ceremonies and crowded markets. A strong storm of peace is overwhelming in Hazima's works, perhaps because he has not yet accepted the bitter reality of losing the peaceful Palestine and still living a state of a beautiful dream about his homeland.

The exhibition, which will continue till 2 October, is well worth seeing for it represents the culture of the Palestinian and their hopes and aspirations for the future.

Al Wathiq (The Document) by
Tamam Al Akhal, 1993New managers at
British Airways

British Airways has recently promoted two Jordanians from its staff to senior positions. Mr. Saad Jaber has been appointed Sales Manager, Jordan, while Mr. Mazen Qursia has been appointed Airport Manager for the airline. Both have had comprehensive training in the airline industry and have held several related jobs in the region, as well as having worked for several travel agencies and airlines before joining British Airways.

British Airways has always asserted its commitment to the Jordanian market, and the importance of teamwork and dedication in achieving its goals. The airline's office in Amman recently won the "Award For Excellence" for its contribution to the region.

Forte
Grand to
become
Le Meridien
Amman

ON 15th December 1997, Forte Grand Amman will become Le Meridien Amman. On 9th September, Mr. Zuhair Khouri, chairman of the recently formed Housing Bank Company for Touristic and Hotel Investments, owner of Forte Grand Amman and Mr. Alfonso Gianuzzi, Chairman of Forte/Le Meridien Hotels & Resorts, formerly signed the contract sealing an agreement for Forte to manage the existing Forte Grand as Le Meridien Amman for the next 10 years.

Since the acquisition of Le Meridien by Forte Hotels in 1994, the company, itself acquired by Granada PLC in 1996, has been undergoing radical change. The decision was made early on that the Le Meridien name would become the brand for Forte's international chain of 4 and 5 star deluxe hotels. Currently numbering 80 hotels on all five continents the company plans to double this within five years. Existing Forte Grand and unbranded hotels in the group have been "Meridienising" at a steady pace during the past year.

Becoming a Le Meridien hotel is not just a case of changing the name and the sign. Le Meridien is a culture. As a major European hotel chain, Le Meridien, originally part of Air France, is destined to retain its French origins even though they are British owned. Le Meridien hotels are committed to carrying on the finest tradition of European hotelierie, while carefully respecting and integrating the very best of the culture in the host country where the hotels are located.

The year 1988 will see some major redevelopment for Le Meridien Amman. Plans are underway to rescheme four of the hotel's restaurants, re-design the entrance and lobby, refurbish two floors of guest rooms and to create a multi-purpose function hall on the roof. Staff development and training are a fundamental part of the cultural change Forte Grand Amman will experience before and after they change to Le Meridien.

With similar re-branding taking place this year in Dubai and with new acquisitions occurring in Yemen, Egypt and India at a steady pace, Le Meridien Hotels & Resorts are a major

Le
MERIDIEN
AMMAN
HOTELS & RESORTS

player amongst the deluxe, up-market hotel chains operating in the Middle East. Currently managing 17 hotels in 12 locations, the number of hotels is expected to rise to 21 by the end of next year. Peter Cardwell, a Forte veteran and the new Managing Director for the Middle East division based in Dubai, accompanied Mr. Gianuzzi for his visit to Amman. Mr. Cardwell said "Forte is delighted to have the opportunity of managing a Le Meridien hotel in Amman. With 10 years of experience in the Jordan market, I am confident we can continue to provide superb services and facilities for our guests in what undoubtedly will become a highly competitive market."

Coca Cola training workshop

THE COCA Cola Company hosted a workshop of Cola sales managers titled "Supervising Route Distribution Effectiveness Workshop." This special seminar was the first ever Coca Cola course to be conducted in Arabic and ran from 1-5 September.

Among the 26 participants there were Coca Cola employees from Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco and 15 participants from Coca Cola Jordan. The course was directed by Coca Cola Near East Operations Manager, Mr. Rafik El Toukhi, and had a number of lecturers including Mr. Francois Mourad the training and development manager for Coca Cola Near East.

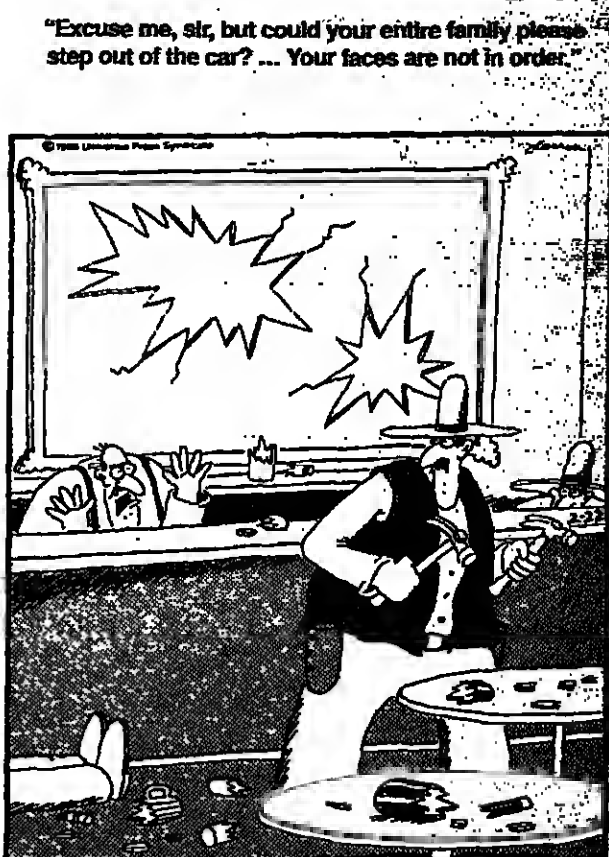
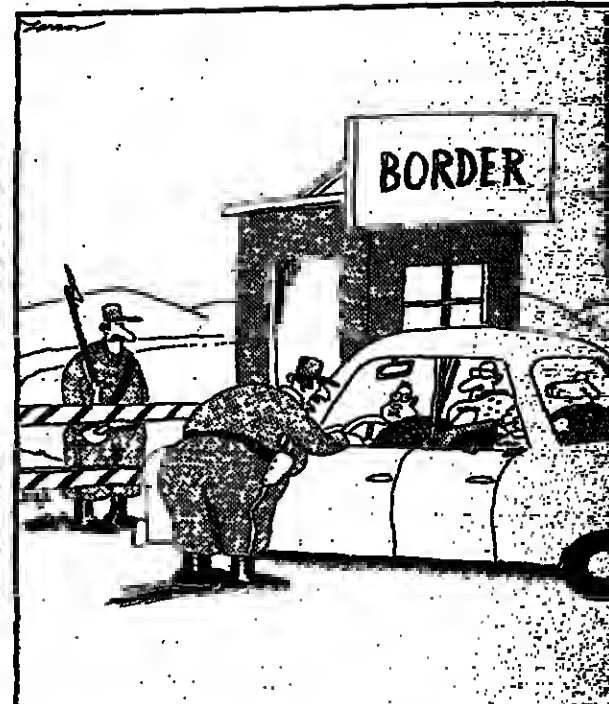
When asked why the course was conducted in Jordan Mr. Mourad Replied: "Jordan has always been of major importance to the Coca Cola Company, and it has made and continues to



make major investments to improve the employees' skills in Jordan and the region in an effort to insure the quality of its product and the service standards of the International Company."

THE FAR SIDE

By GARY LAKE



SLAPSTIX
If a coach starts listening
to fans, he winds up
sitting next to them.

© 1997, Tribune Media Services

A giant lab
FacAn eye to the
on young peo

Seen through

Thai

By Tiana Gill

They have been a part of the Bangkok scene for many years, and have been a part of the Thai scene for many years. They have been a part of the Thai scene for many years, and have been a part of the Thai scene for many years. They have been a part of the Thai scene for many years, and have been a part of the Thai scene for many years.

The eyes, which represent the eyes of the Thai people, are the eyes of the Thai people. They are the eyes of the Thai people, and they are the eyes of the Thai people. They are the eyes of the Thai people, and they are the eyes of the Thai people.

Born in Bangkok nearly 13 years ago, the Magic Eyes campaign—which also includes tree planting and waste recycling activities—is being copied abroad. The Rio de Janeiro, where the Thai campaign was first launched, is a place where Magic Eyes are being used.

"We decided to take our environmental campaign so we'd share the right thing," founder of the Thai and Community Development (TECDA) Magic Eyes campaign are no figures available as part of the campaign.

TEENA GILL is a BANGKOK JOURNALIST SPECIALIZING IN ENVIRONMENTAL DEVELOPMENT ISSUES.

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A special section offering
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global issues prepared for
The Star

THE WORLD PAPER

PRINTED IN SIX LANGUAGES
ON FIVE CONTINENTS

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A giant laboratory for urban best practices

Faced with the impossible, mega-cities are learning how to make (waste)water into wine

An eye to the future: the Magic Eyes program in Bangkok focuses on young people, teaching them to respect their environment



The world is urbanizing at a dramatic rate; by the year 2000 there will be 23 mega-cities counting more than 10 million residents each. Faced with soaring populations, limited physical resources and never enough money, these giant cities are forced to innovate constantly. The resulting 'best practices' serve not only their architects, but offer hope to the half of humanity that call a city home

Community policing experiment pays off for New York

Big Apple bites crime to the core

By Daniel Levering

WHEN TWO FORMER New York police officers arrived at a school in the heart of Port-au-Prince last month as part of the UN mission to Haiti, there was mayhem. Three hundred students filled the streets around the Lycée Pétion, burning tires and hurling rocks at passing cars. They protested the neglect of local authorities to maintain their school which stood crumbling and reeking of garbage.

Raymond Kelly, a former New York City police commissioner, exported New York-style policing to Haiti during the US intervention in 1994. Now, after an abrupt drop in crime, New York and its police draw attention beyond Haiti as global urbanization and political upheaval force many cities to reconsider their methods of law enforcement.

tailored partnerships with local organizations and making police more accessible to the public. Brown brought community policing to New York City at a time when police here and elsewhere were more concerned with response time and quick case-solving than crime prevention, a tendency that began in the late 1960s and early 1970s. (Crime, it was thought, had deep social roots and police could do little more than keep it at bay.)

New York City's new wave of community policing began in 1990, a time when the city was rife with crime. Mayor David Dinkins appointed Lee Brown commissioner of police and through his "Safe Streets, Safe City" legislation generated tax money to add 7,000 officers to the city's force, at Brown's behest.

proved effective and the crime rate dropped, if gradually. But it was Mayor Rudolph Giuliani's appointee, William Bratton, who applied this idea more rigorously, bringing the crime rate to unprecedented lows.

Kelling and Wilson suggest one broken window leads to many broken windows, that minor offenses set the stage for major offenses

The lowest level The new strategy was to integrate police officers into neighborhoods so they could identify and stop crime at its lowest level, preventing escalation or the encouragement of more crime. This en-

As police commissioner from 1994 to 1996, Bratton shook up the New York City Police Department by holding the city's 76 precinct commanders directly accountable for crime in their areas. He negotiated the assignment of several

► BIG APPLE PAGE 2

Seen through Magic Eyes, one step is better than no step

Thai program catches them young

By Teena Gill

TRY FLICKING A CIGARETTE stub on a busy Bangkok sidewalk these days and it could well turn out to be the costliest smoke you ever had. The reason? A new anti-littering campaign launched a year ago by the Bangkok Municipal Authority which, with fines ranging up to 2,000 baht (US\$75), is trying hard to change the way adults behave in public places.

But for thousands of children in the rapidly growing Thai capital, the intimidating presence of police to keep them from littering is unnecessary. What they have to remind them of their basic civic duties are the ever watchful "Magic Eyes."

The eyes, which are supposed to represent the eyes of a typical Thai ghost, are the brainchild of Khunying Chodchay Sophanpanich, scion of one of Thailand's richest business families. Plastered in schools and on walls throughout Bangkok, Magic Eyes are an attempt to instill environmental awareness among Thai citizens at a very young age.

Born in Bangkok nearly 13 years ago, the Magic Eyes campaign—which also includes tree planting and waste recycling activities—is being copied abroad. This includes far-off Brazil, where the Rio Limpo project in Rio de Janeiro acknowledges inspiration from the Thai campaign, and the Philippines, where Magic Eyes concepts and strategies are being adopted to clean up Manila.

"We decided to target children for our environmental cleanliness campaign so we'd 'shame' adults into doing the right thing," says Chodchay, founder of the Thai Environmental and Community Development Association (TECDA), which runs the Magic Eyes campaign. Though there are no figures available about the impact of the campaign, "Magic Eyes is

one of the very few non-profit organizations trying to do something to alter behavioral patterns," says Meechai Viravaidya, a former Minister of Public Health who earned worldwide fame while in office for his family planning and anti-AIDS campaigns.

Coming from the Sophonpanich clan, which owns the Bangkok Bank, Southeast Asia's largest private bank, has certainly helped Chodchay. TECDA now counts 36 corporations among its backers.

Given Chodchay's own experience as a businesswoman, it is not surprising that one of the key reasons for the success of the Magic Eyes campaign was the extensive use of modern marketing and advertising concepts. Along with the creation of a popular logo consisting of a pair of spooky looking eyes, the campaign has enlisted advertisement jingles, television talk shows and the media to drive home its message. Interestingly, a number of the concepts used in its environment awareness advertisements were created by schoolchildren participating in competitions organized by TECDA.

"We use private sector expertise and strategy for our campaigns as if we were trying to sell a new product," explains Chodchay, who feels that the involvement of private companies in the campaign has helped sustain it over a long period of time.

Chodchay is not without her critics however, especially those activists who feel that the Magic Eyes campaigns only scratch the surface of the monumental problems facing Thailand's environment. "The group has succeeded in creating awareness but does not have enough practical activities to sustain the enthusiasm created," says Ruankaw Bururung, editor of a Thai publication for children at the Thailand Environment Institute, a major policy think tank in Bangkok.

Chodchay's supporters however point out that the Magic Eyes campaigns, by raising urban environmental issues, has motivated government

and civic institutions to incorporate such ideas in their work. A recent instance of such impact is the Bangkok Municipal Administration's adoption of recycling concepts promoted by the Magic Eyes campaign. Early this year the BMA invited tenders to set up and operate a \$1.2 billion garbage disposal plant for Bangkok. When complete, it will be one of the biggest in the region.

"We, as an NGO, must decide how much the public can and will accept and have realistic targets. We think that to improve 30 percent is better than 26 percent and 20 percent is better than nothing," says Chodchay summing up her philosophy of incremental improvement of the environment.

Rotating licence plates take a bite out of São Paulo's pollution

São Paulo is the second largest city in the world with a population of over 17 million, half of whom own a car. The pollution is so potent that it is almost palpable, and the traffic congestion is inconceivable to anyone who considers an hour sitting in stand still traffic a bother. To alleviate these problems the Brazilian government has introduced a scheme called *rodizio* (meaning rotation).

The operation, which this year began on June 23 and will go on until the end of August or early September (depending on how much of the pollution has dispersed), discourages vehicles from entering the city on one day out of five. Number plates are used to identify which cars can be driven on which days. Fines of US\$90 for a car and nearly double that for a truck are allocated to those who do not adhere to the rules. Approximately 10,000 fines are given each day. Vehicles with number plates ending in 1 or 2 cannot be driven from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Mondays, those ending in 3 or 4 on Tuesdays, 5 or 6 on Wednesdays, 7 or 8 on Thursdays and 9 or 0 on Fridays. The weekends are exempt from the program.

The primary aim of the operation is to reduce carbon monoxide emissions and inhalable particles in the city. The first day produced promising results, with a 10 percent decrease in pollution reported. This was due to the 20 percent reduction in the influx of vehicles which resulted in 287 tons less carbon monoxide being released into the atmosphere. The decrease in the number of vehicles entering the city also had positive repercussions on the traffic congestion. Morning queues now span approximately 5 kilometres; lunch time traffic is usually only 1, it is only in the early evening rush hour that bumper to bumper traffic backing up as much as 54 kilometres is reported. The traffic flow in São Paulo has never been so good, bar the few days at the beginning of January when most people were away on summer holidays.

The *rodizio* affects all persons including unauthorized taxi drivers, doctors, rental car companies and lorries not transporting perishable

goods. Those transporting perishable products are exempt due to the necessity of maintaining particular temperatures and humidity to avoid deterioration. Fish, meat, eggs, vegetables, flowers, fruit, and caterers are considered in this category. Vehicle drivers must carry a special identification card which must be endorsed by the mayor's office.

Some leeway has also been granted to expectant mothers, although it doesn't amount to much. They are still liable to be fined, but in the case of a proven emergency the fine will be annulled. This ensures that pregnant mothers will not abuse the scheme by going shopping for example. Reactions to this compromise are mixed. Edlene Madureira de Oliveira, 28 years old and nearly nine months pregnant is already preparing things in case an emergency arises on a Wednesday, which is the day that she cannot use her car. In anticipation of a problem, she has procured a certificate from her doctor which exempts her from paying a fine. Mother-to-be Nelide Duarte, 34 years old, on the other hand, is not at all worried by the *rodizio*. "The car is new and I don't even know what the number plate reads," O Estado de São Paulo report her as saying. She does not have any documents stating that she is pregnant; should an emergency arise, the only evidence is her belly.

Overall, A Companhia de Tecnologia de Saneamento Ambiental reports that approximately 95 percent of car drivers are complying with the rules of the *rodizio*. The program has been successful enough to be considered for national expansion this year as part of a federal project which would make the scheme obligatory at the metropolitan regions of all Brazilian states. In São Paulo 55 percent of the population state they want the *rodizio* to become a permanent fixture, but only during rush hour. The principal reason is, ironically, because of the improvement in traffic flow rather than for the environmental benefits.

By Natalia Jacob



TEENA GILL IS A BANGKOK-BASED JOURNALIST SPECIALIZING IN DEVELOPMENT ISSUES.

Indian mothers freed by a service that follows them around

Building a creche system, brick by brick

By Mukul Sharma

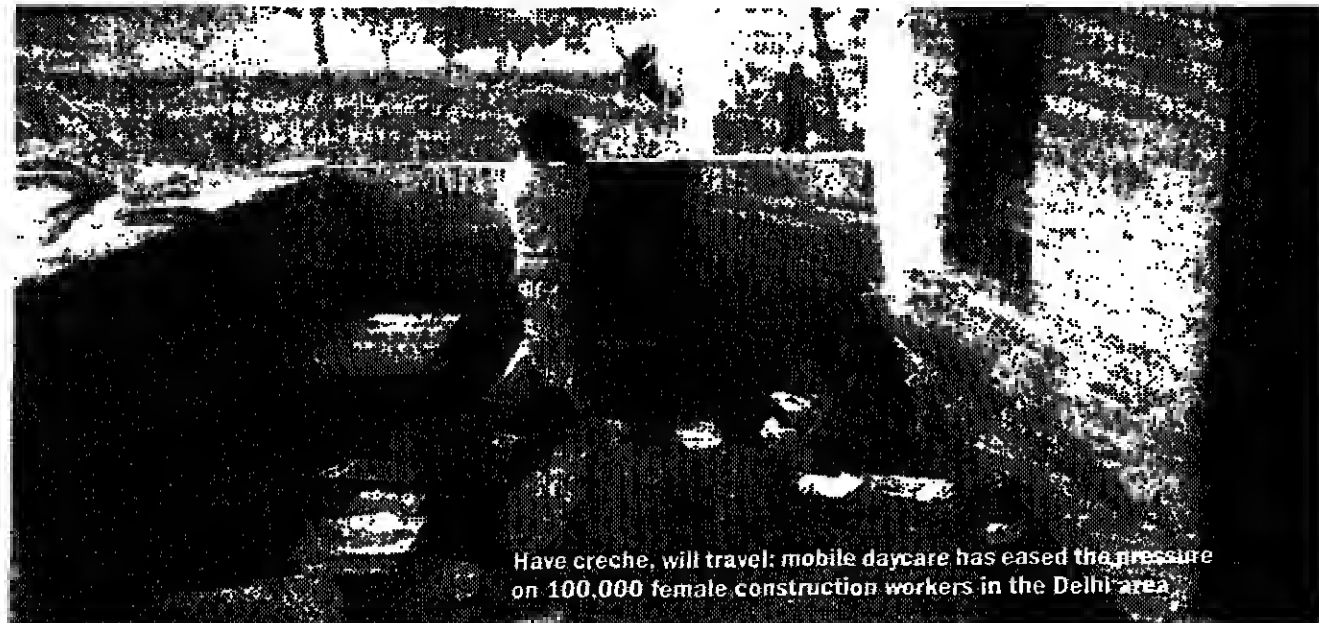
REWATI AND MOHANLAL, wife and husband, are migrant laborers and work regularly on the construction sites of New Delhi, India's capital city. They earn a combined maximum of 80 rupees daily—a sum that puts the cost of a private creche for their two children beyond their reach.

Paying domestic help for day care, the common practice among middle and upper class families, is utterly impossible on their budget.

Despite working on dozens of different construction projects during the past five years, the couple did not come across a single creche where they could leave their children for the whole day, although several laws mandate that construction companies above a certain size provide daycare for workers' children up to 6 years of age. Rewati had to resort to being absent from her work.

But now a "mobile creche," which started operating recently at her construction site, has changed her life dramatically. The creche, run by a voluntary organization named Mobile Creches, takes care of her two children while she and her spouse are away at work. When construction is completed here, Rewati and 48 other female construction workers will move to another site—and the creche will shift with them. The place, location and number of children in a creche thus keeps adjusting to the needs of the workers, moving along with the infants until they reach the age of 12.

The capital city of India has a booming construction industry, which is not only restricted to New Delhi, but has spread to all the surrounding areas.



Have creche, will travel: mobile daycare has eased the pressure on 100,000 female construction workers in the Delhi area.

known as the National Capital Region. According to the Directorate of Economics, Government of Delhi, there are almost one million people engaged in construction work in and around New Delhi, of which 10 percent are women. This sector is completely dominated by migrant workers.

The construction industry is mobile. As construction in one place finishes, the workers have to leave for another place in search of work. This prompted a non-governmental organization (NGO) to set up the first

The creche thus keeps adjusting to the needs of the workers, moving along with the infants until they reach the age of 12

ever mobile creches in Delhi, at the construction sites itself. But after a time, they also realized the need to spread out and open centers in slums, resettlement colonies and other poor residential areas.

"At present, we are running 15 centers in Delhi at the construction sites, seven in resettlement colonies and three in

slums," says Bhagya Lakshmi, a worker for Mobile Creches. "We are small and inadequate," observes Lakshmi. "So we are trying to motivate other people, like the contractors at the construction sites or the heads of building associations, to run their own creches with our help. Their message seems to be spreading and now three contractors are running these creches on their own in Delhi."

Mobile Creches attempts to tackle the problems of the urban poor, who have inadequate sanitation, acute shortage of safe water, absence of drainage and garbage disposal systems, unsympathetic municipal and civic bodies and a general ignorance regarding appropriate weaning, feeding and management of common childhood ailments. Mobile Creches takes care of the obvious physical needs of the children, conducts daily programs of non-formal education and develops creative games for the children to play.

It all began in 1969, when Meera Mahadevan, a Gandhian, saw a child playing in a heap of rubble at a construction site in Delhi, as her mother

carried bricks and mortar for a monument to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi's birth. Deeply moved by this sight, she decided to set up a creche for the children of mothers working at construction sites, and living in the slums and resettlement colonies of Delhi.

In the course of time, Mahadevan's idea has moved beyond Delhi. Presently Mobile Creches runs 377 centers all over the country. It has permanent offices in Delhi, Mumbai and Pune. In 1995-96, it provided day care, health, hygiene, nutrition and primary education services to over 15,000 children.

Meanwhile, the women workers in the construction industry of Delhi do the most strenuous and unskilled jobs, such as brick-making, stone quarrying, assembling of construction materials and lifting of stones, bricks and cement.

The urban construction industry does not realize—or accept—the amount of physical hardship and strenuous work that a woman worker undergoes at the construction sites. The city is also immune to the needs, desires and dreams of poor children. Mobile Creches provides a spark of optimism in this grim scenario. ☐

MUKUL SHARMA IS A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT FOR THE TIMES OF INDIA NEWSPAPER GROUP.

BIG APPLE

Continued from page 1

thousand police officers to the streets and introduced COMPSTAT, a computer surveillance system providing updates on criminal activity throughout the city. Bratton met with precinct commanders on a weekly basis, reviewing all instances of crime and demanding explanations. Running the department like a corporation, he wanted results.

Those results came quickly. Murders in New York City fell from 1,946 in 1993 to 986 by the end of 1996. Car thefts, which had risen to 143,000 in 1990, plummeted to 65,000 by 1996.

But the intellectual source of Bratton's campaign in New York is George Kelling and James Q. Wilson, authors of the 1982 *Atlantic Monthly* article "Broken Windows." In it, they suggest one broken window leads to many broken windows, that minor offenses

set the stage for major offenses. Despite criticism from civil libertarians and criminologists, Bratton stamped out "quality of life" crimes: car window washers or "squeegee" pests, aggressive pan-handlers, people drinking and urinating in public. He first tested this approach as head of the city's transit police in 1990, reducing crime on city subways by nearly 50 percent.

"You lock up people on minor offenses," explains Kevin Tyrrell, a police officer who spent 13 years serving in 10 different Manhattan precincts, "you find that a lot of them have outstanding warrants, or are carrying guns."

Keeping the faith
Now a private consultant, Bratton—who resigned as police commissioner last year after a dispute with Giuliani over credit for the lowered crime rate—takes New York's strategy abroad, marketing the plan to mega-cities around the world.

"I'm more convinced than ever," Bratton says, "that what we developed in New York is applicable anywhere, in a modified fashion. You wouldn't take everything we did and apply it in Johannesburg or Mexico City, but the core theories and philosophy of community policing are transferable."

Bratton's firm, First Security Services, Inc., has consulted police forces in England, South Africa, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Hungary, Argentina, and several US cities.

Community policing has its roots in London where Britain's home secretary, Robert Peel, created a police force in 1829 to counter a rise in crime spurred by industrialization. Bobbies took to the streets, becoming members of the community: a constant, watchful presence.

Critics say this approach, as interpreted by Bratton, can be too aggressive. "We're concerned about police going after non-criminal activity," says Chris Hanson, an attorney at the New York Civil Liberties Union. "Police have gotten much more aggressive at stopping and searching people. We get lots of complaints about police misconduct. Many are unfounded, but many aren't."

"Think in short bursts"
These concerns resurfaced after the arrest of a Haitian immigrant on August 9. The man, Abner Louima, alleges that he was beaten and sexually assaulted with a toilet plunger at the 70th Precinct station. As a result of the incident, the current commission-

er, Howard Safir, is considering a recall of officers in Haiti on the grounds they are more urgently needed in New York. Other critics argue that what the NYPD does is not community policing but instead targeted, militaristic crime fighting. Nicholas Pastore, a research fellow at the Criminal Justice Policy Foundation and a former police chief, argues that New York's leaders "think in short bursts."

"New York's failing is not bringing the community along with them, so they are part of what's going on. That gives you long-term, rooted solutions," says Pastore. ☐

DANIEL LOVERING IS A CANDIDATE FOR A MASTER'S DEGREE IN JOURNALISM AT COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY.

We get lots of complaints about police misconduct. Many are unfounded, but many aren't.

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Private company gives Mexicans tools to recycle sewage

SIRDO mixes bacteria, filters and the profit motive to clean up water

By Rhona Stalland de Lopez

MEXICO CITY has approximately 20 million people and is still growing. Although it was built in the middle of a lake more than 600 years ago, today the city hardly has enough water to sustain the population.

While this megacity gets its drinking water from relatively pure rivers outside the metropolitan area, water for everything else from washing cars to watering lawns is at a premium. Many of the lakes have been poisoned by human waste. Coming up with creative alternatives for providing non-toxic water has become a priority as the demand for water increases and the supply dwindles.

One of the most innovative programs for recycling waste and water is the Integrated System for the Recycling of Organic Waste, known by its Spanish acronym, SIRDO.

Developed by Mexican architect Josefina Mena, SIRDO offers hope to areas of Mexico City that still have no formal municipal sewage service—and lack the resources to install conventional systems. Mena's designs combine the use of filters, solar energy and fermentation in self-contained structures that can be adapted to the size of the community involved.

In the most basic model, a person defecates into kind of toilet that doesn't flush, but instead has a tank to collect the waste, then throws dry leaves or dirt on it after he or she is finished. This mixes with a chemical preparation already in the tank that accelerates the process of decomposition. Six months later, non-toxic bio-fertilizer can be collected from the tank.

This "dry" system uses no water. Other, "wet systems"—some large enough to serve whole housing developments or hotels—separate out the solid waste in tanks, while the water coming from showers, sinks and the like are processed "through a slow-acting biological filter, generating water that is appropriate to irrigating crops and gardens," says Mena.

For more than a decade, Mena has been refining her invention so that waste-

water can be recycled and human waste can be turned into useful substances.

One of the latest structures to be used is a type of outhouse with tanks below made from recycled polyethylene. They are light, durable, and impermeable. This impermeability is very important since otherwise there would be a high risk of the waste leaching into the soil, eventually contaminating rivers and causing disease.

One of the most interesting aspects of SIRDO is the organization that was created to make the final product a profitable enterprise for the community. The Alternative Technological Group, known by its Spanish initials GTA, helps communities secure credit (government and private) to purchase, install and operate SIRDO. GTA also educates communities about the system and the ways

of generating needed income for the communities that utilize it.

There are drawbacks to this for-profit approach. According to one report, "In trying to sell their product, [GTA] may give an unrealistic picture of its potential and requirements, they may overlook a community's lack of consensus on the purposes of adopting SIRDO technology or fail to point out the inappropriateness of SIRDO given a community's needs."

Despite such criticism, GTA is pressing on. It is currently in the process of doing a viability study on ways to improve people's willingness to use eco-friendly detergents. Currently, even those products that claim to be biodegradable sometimes take months or even years to disintegrate.

The GTA objective is to help communities sell detergents that degrade within a matter of days.

If all goes as planned, the GTA will encourage these communities to grow certain plants that will, in turn, produce essential oils to be added to biodegradable detergent. These will give the detergents pleasing fragrances that should encourage people to use them. ☐

RHONA STALLAND DE LOPEZ WRITES FOR THE NEWS, A MEXICO CITY-BASED NEWSPAPER.

Today's shower, tomorrow's tomato: Water filtered through SIRDO systems in Mexico City can be used for urban agriculture

it can be used as a catalyst for money-making activities.

Getting people engaged is critical, as SIRDO requires considerable community involvement to be effective. SIRDO relies largely on organic processes that must be monitored carefully. If the guidelines aren't followed—not adding leaves after using a SIRDO toilet, for instance—

these processes can rapidly grind to a halt.

To boost interest, Mena has focused on the economic benefits for the community, since this is a stronger selling point than the less quantifiable ecological advantages. Using the fertilizer to grow vegetables in their own gardens helps the community to provide better food for their families than they could normally afford. In addition, they earn extra money when selling the rest.

GTA is also involved in several other micro-enterprises that, says Mena, are producing profits for several poor communities. For example, one complex SIRDO filter system allows recycled water to be used for raising fish. Another system allows fertilizer obtained from organic waste to be used to cultivate flowers on a large scale. In this way, SIRDO has become self-sustaining as well as a means

of generating needed income for the communities that utilize it.

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THIRD PLACE PRIZE POOL

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SUBSIDIARY PRIZE POOL

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TOTAL PRIZE POOL

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The Star's GUIDE

Programs on JTV
from 13-19 September



Amman cinemas

- Philadelphia I (Tel: 634149):
The Saint
- Philadelphia II (Tel: 634149):
Fear
- Plaza (Tel: 699238):
Al Mara' Wal Satour (Arabic)
- Concord I (Tel: 677420):
A Time to Kill
- Concord II (Tel: 677420):
ACE Ventura I

Movies & Videos

PARADISE ROAD

● Starring Glenn Close, this film centers on a little known chapter of World War II, involving the capture of tens of thousands of Europeans, Australians and Americans by the Japanese as they swept through the Far East, the film focuses on a disparate group of women. Directed by Bruce Beresford.



ENGLISH PROGRAMS

SATURDAY

- 2:00—Holy Koran
- 2:30—Muppet Show
- 3:00—Blue Heelers
- 3:30—World of Geo
- 4:00—The Vally Between
- 4:30—Tilt
- 5:00—French Programs
- 7:30—News Headlines
- 7:35—Neighbors
- 8:00—Ties that Bind
- 8:30—Prism
- 9:10—Time Trax
- 10:00—News at Ten
- 10:30—Feature Film

SUNDAY

- 2:00—Holy Koran
- 2:30—The Magic School Bus
- 3:00—Eenergy Express
- 3:40—Lucky Luky
- 4:00—American Chart Show
- 6:00—French Programs
- 7:00—News in French
- 7:30—News Headlines
- 7:35—Fresh Prince of Bel Air
- 8:00—Cinema, Cinema, Cinema
- 8:30—National Geographic
- 9:10—Renegade
- 10:00—News at Ten
- 10:30—One West Walkiki
- 11:15—Sisters

MONDAY

- 2:00—Holy Koran
- 2:10—The Show With The Mouse
- 2:30—Cowboy Of The Mos Mesa
- 3:00—Gillette Sports Special
- 3:30—Deep Water Have
- 4:00—Animal Show
- 4:30—Ocean Girl
- 5:15—French Programs
- 7:30—News Headlines
- 7:30—News Headlines
- 7:35—Neighbors
- 8:00—Murphy Brown



Homicide, Monday at 11:15 pm

- 8:30—Babylon 5
- 9:10—Highlander
- 10:00—News at Ten
- 10:30—Emergency Room(e.r)
- 11:15—Homicide

TUESDAY

- 2:00—Holy Koran
- 2:10—Sandocan
- 2:30—C.R.O.
- 3:00—Square One T.V
- 3:30—Skippy
- 4:30—The Album Show
- 5:15—French Programs
- 7:00—News in French
- 7:30—News Headlines
- 7:35—Coach
- 8:00—Tilt
- 8:30—Encounter
- 9:10—Nature of Things
- 10:00—News at Ten
- 10:30—Great Defender

WEDNESDAY

- 2:00—Holy Koran
- 2:10—Joany Quest
- 2:30—Super Dane
- 3:00—Secrets of Treasure Island
- 3:30—Spell Binder
- 4:00—Monsters Today
- 4:30—Border Town
- 6:00—French Programs
- 7:00—News in French
- 7:30—News Headlines
- 7:35—Neighbors
- 8:00—Soldier's Diary
- 8:30—Oprah Winfrey Show
- 9:10—Spencer for Hire
- 10:00—News at Ten
- 10:25—Land's End
- 11:00—American Gothic

THURSDAY

- 2:00—Holy Koran
- 2:10—Ovide and The Gang
- 2:30—The New Fred and Barney
- 3:00—America's Funniest People
- 3:30—He Shoot He Scores
- 4:30—Shingalana
- 5:00—French Programs
- 7:00—News in French
- 7:30—News Headlines
- 7:35—Trivial Pursuit
- 8:00—Parenthood
- 8:30—Jois and clark (Superman)
- 9:10—Kung Fu
- 10:00—News at Ten
- 10:30—Feature Film
- 12:00—Step By Step

FRIDAY

- 2:00—Holy Koran
- 2:05—Flstones
- 2:30—Leo The Lion
- 3:00—French Programs
- 4:00—Family Matters
- 4:30—NBA
- 6:10—French Film
- 7:00—News in French
- 7:30—News Headlines
- 7:35—Neighbors
- 8:00—The Health Show
- 8:30—Adventures of Brisco County
- 9:10—Drama Series
- 10:00—News at Ten
- 10:30—Best Seller
- 11:15—Daddy's Girls

PROGRAMMES EN FRANÇAIS

- SAMEDI
- 5:00—Qui est qui ?
- 5:30—Des chiffres et des lettres
- 6:00—Yacoutie
- 7:00—Le journal

- 7:15—Magazine L'œil de Colomb

DIMANCHE

- 5:00—Qui est qui ?
- 5:30—Des chiffres et des lettres
- 6:00—Magazine Faut pas rêver
- 7:00—Le journal
- 7:15—Magazine pour tous

LUNDI

- 5:00—Qui est qui ?
- 5:30—Des chiffres et des lettres
- 6:00—Thalassä
- 7:00—Le journal
- 7:15—Magazine scientifique

MARDI

- 5:00—Qui est qui ?
- 5:30—Des chiffres et des lettres
- 6:00—Captain Café Emission de variétés
- 7:00—Le journal
- 7:15—Orient sur Seine

MERCREDI

- 5:00—Qui est qui ?
- 5:30—Des chiffres et des lettres
- 6:00—Magazine
- 7:00—Le journal
- 7:15—Magazine

JEUDI

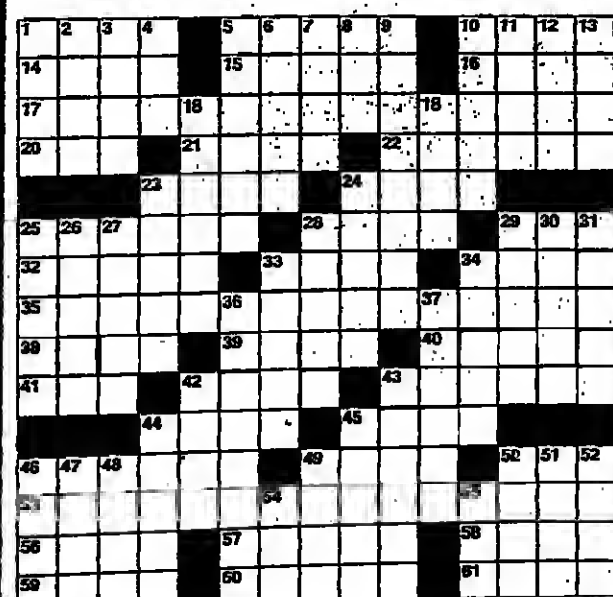
- 5:00—Qui est qui ?
- 5:30—Divertissement
- 7:00—Le journal
- 7:15—Le dessous des cartes

VENREDI

- 3:20—Divertissement L'école des fans
- 5:30—Qui numéro 1 - 2/3
- 7:00—Le journal
- 7:15—Magazine
- Allo la terre

Programs are subject to change by JTV

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



- | | | | | | |
|--------|---------------------|----|---------------------|----|--------------------|
| ACROSS | vehicles | 1 | Formal agreement | 30 | Wide tie |
| 1 | Cobble | 40 | Monstrous head | 31 | Convenes |
| 5 | Wanderer | 41 | Sun, talk | 38 | Belling string |
| 10 | Insult | 42 | Andrews or Wymas | 34 | Generals |
| 14 | Middle or Dark | 43 | Wave tops | 3 | Tow |
| 15 | Cognizant | 44 | Raptor | 4 | South sense |
| 16 | Perry the crooner | 45 | Hastings housegown | 5 | Country |
| 17 | Flats | 46 | One lacking pigment | 6 | Due |
| 20 | Subject to hardship | 47 | Mend | 7 | Horse |
| 21 | Can live? | 48 | argyles | 8 | Biblical host |
| 22 | Ease up | 49 | Famous | 9 | Wane |
| 23 | Plod heavily | 50 | West | 10 | Reprove |
| 24 | Fodder | 51 | Traffic sign? | 11 | Affliction |
| 25 | Hold up | 52 | Metrical foot | 12 | Grace |
| 26 | Shedding wood | 53 | Settled after fight | 13 | Nautical left |
| 29 | Hoover, for one | 54 | Social insects | 14 | Sign up |
| 32 | Racehorses | 55 | Welles or Bean | 15 | Orion |
| 33 | Old salts | 56 | Sagacious | 16 | Place for dressing |
| 34 | Army site | 57 | DOWN | 17 | Front plants |
| 35 | Whites | 58 | | 18 | Dummies |
| 36 | out (family got by) | 59 | | 19 | Bring out |
| 39 | Truckers | 60 | | 20 | Spud |
| | | 61 | | 21 | Subatomic forest |
| | | | | 22 | Pots on |
| | | | | 23 | Sole terms |
| | | | | 24 | Punta del |
| | | | | 25 | Soap unit |
| | | | | 26 | Crude |

—THIS WEEK'S— HOROSCOPE

By Linda Black

Weekly Tip: Getting organized is a top priority. Spend time cleaning house. Don't waste money on frivolities.

Aries (March 21-April 19). You'll want to work, even if you don't have to. An argument with an attractive person could lead to romance. Pay off an overdue bill.

Taurus (April 20-Sept. 20). Make plans with your true love, then start putting them into action. Let a partner inspire you and lure you into an adventure.

Gemini (Sept. 21-June 21). Stick close to home. Provide comfort to your sweetheart. Help friends see eye to eye by acting as the translator and a mess will clear up.

Cancer (June 22-July 22). Review an old subject rather than starting a new one. You're fascinated by what's going on at home.

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22). Your emphasis is on money. More's coming in, so learn how to take care of it.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You are incredible this time of year. Get everybody around you organized. They all need your helpful advice.

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). If you can't remember making a promise, don't worry. Somebody will remind you. You'll be powerful, confident and good looking.

Scorpio (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). It's about friends and group activities. Assist your committee in finishing a goal they've set. Don't take on any new projects. You're under pressure.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Figure out what needs to happen so you can do it. Finish an old project — don't start a new one yet.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Pay attention to your career. Make points with your supervisor by listening and doing what you're told. Not an easy job.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). These days are about other people's money, getting your affairs in order and finishing the details that were requested. Fill out the paperwork and turn it in.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20). Get everything hashed out so you and your partner know where you stand. Now that you've got a good partnership, start spending money together.

If You're Having a Birthday This Week: You can do whatever you want, once you decide what that is. You're powerful and well organized.

Rock Tracks

By Stacy Jenel Smith

From the mean streets of Beverly Hills comes rap from ... Randy Spelling! Seriously. The son of Aaron Spelling and brother of Tori Spelling reports he's just about to finish his first rap demo album. "Acting is my career and my craft, but music is more something that comes from the soul," observes Randy, who stars on NBC's daytime soap, "Sunset Beach" and has a recurring role on "Beverly Hills 90210." "I started rapping and doing music a couple of years ago," Spelling says his rap influences are groups like Wu-Tang Clan, The Roots and The Fugees. "The rap I listen to is not like gangsta rap, it's more like hip-hop ... it has a positive vibe." He's calling his rap group Linx. "It's kind of like linked souls ... all together or a common cause."

Elton John first rap demo album. "Acting is my career and my craft, but music is more something that comes from the soul," observes Randy, who stars on NBC's daytime soap, "Sunset Beach" and has a recurring role on "Beverly Hills 90210." "I started rapping and doing music a couple of years ago," Spelling says his rap influences are groups like Wu-Tang Clan, The Roots and The Fugees. "The rap I listen to is not like gangsta rap, it's more like hip-hop ... it has a positive vibe." He's calling his rap group Linx. "It's kind of like linked souls ... all together or a common cause."

Alice Cooper, who's been busy touring on behalf of his "Fistful of Alice" album, has had to cut back on his beloved golf for a while. Cooper boasts a four handicap and has won about a dozen amateur tournaments this year. "I wouldn't play professionally, but I think it would be interesting in five years or so for Alice Cooper to join the Seniors Tour," he says. Well, he certainly could pass for the bogey man.

The recent unveiling of the Broadway-bound "Lion King" musical at Minneapolis' Orpheum Theater brought forth six show-stopping numbers and a thunderous standing ovation at the finale. The production features the songs by Elton John and Tim Rice that graced the movie — plus some new numbers by Grammy-winning composers Mark Mancina and Hans Zimmer. "He Lives With You" is one of the highlights of the show.

Frankie Avalon is showcased in the two-volume CD "The Chancellor Story," which contains hits by Bob Marucci's stable of '50s-'60s Chancellor Records stars. He recalls that when he started out, people said, "He'll be lucky if he lasts a year." Some 40 years later, he remains busy, dividing his time between his business enterprises and playing dates in Las Vegas, Atlantic City and elsewhere.

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Supplément en français du Star

Des SDF israéliens se réfugient chez les Palestiniens

■ *Huit sans-logis israéliens, qui ont demandé l'asile politique à l'Autorité palestinienne, se sont installés dans la ville autonome de Jéricho où ils ont été traités comme des rois. Les huit juifs séparés, dont un bébé, font partie d'un groupe de squatters qui avait lancé en juillet une campagne contre la cherté des loyers en Israël, en occupant des appartements publics. Trois d'entre eux étaient allés jusqu'à menacer de se suicider en faisant exploser des grenades si le gouvernement ne leur fournissait pas de logement. Se disant choqués par les méthodes violentes employées par le gouvernement israélien pour les déloger, les trois sans-logis se sont tournés la semaine dernière vers l'Autorité palestinienne, triomphe attendu de faire ainsi un pied de nez au gouvernement de Benjamin Netanyahu. L'Autorité les a accueillis à ses frais à l'hôtel Jérusalem de Jéricho. Depuis, cinq autres sans-logis les ont rejoints et 120 familles seraient, selon eux, en attente. «Les Palestiniens sont aux petits soins avec nous», se réjouit Shlomo Buzi, 29 ans, un juif religieux. Tous dénoncent avec anxiété la politique de Netanyahu, pour qui ils avaient pourtant voté en mai 1996. «Ce gouvernement m'a trahi en se désintéressant du problème des plus démunis», déclare encore Shlomo Buzi. Selon les estimations de l'opposition de gauche, 100.000 familles sont affectées par la crise du logement en Israël.*

Vous voulez écrire en français?

Alors n'hésitez pas à collaborer à la rédaction du Jourdain. Que vous soyez passionné d'économie, de politique, de faits de société ou de culture, vos articles nous intéressent. Pour tout renseignement, contactez Yannick Lainé au Star au 645 380 / 652 380.

Nouvelles du Pays

Député, c'est un métier

Comme en Jordanie, le parlement français compte deux chambres : le Sénat et l'Assemblée nationale. Celle-ci est composée de 577 députés qui tous, jonglent avec un emploi du temps serré.

Les députés sont élus pour cinq ans au suffrage universel direct. Ce mandat peut être écarté en cas de dissolution de l'Assemblée, prononcée par le président de la République : les nouvelles élections ont alors lieu 20 jours au moins et 10 jours au plus après la dissolution. Bien qu'il n'y ait qu'une seule circonscription, le député est investi en tant que représentant de la Nation, d'un mandat national. Il est protégé durant ses fonctions par deux immunités : l'irresponsabilité, qui lui permet d'échapper à toute poursuite pour les opinions ou votes qu'il a pu exprimer et l'inviolabilité qui écarte pendant les sessions toute possibilité d'action en justice contre lui, en matière criminelle ou correctionnelle, sauf autorisation expresse de la chambre à laquelle il appartient. Les députés ont la possibilité de rallier un groupe parlementaire, représentatif d'un parti : le groupe est formé à partir d'un effectif minimum de 20 membres.

Chaque groupe désigne en son sein un président, des orateurs et prend position sur les textes. Le député est en général présent à l'Assemblée nationale du mardi au jeudi soir. Là, il dispose d'un bureau qui, avec une banquette-lit et un cabinet de toilette, peut lui servir également de chambre à coucher. La journée suit le rythme des diverses commissions dont il est membre et où les textes sont discutés avant d'être présentés à l'hémicycle. Le reste de la semaine se passe dans sa circonscription : rencontres avec ses administrés, cocktails et inaugurations diverses, préparation de la prochaine session, ses après-midi et ses soirées sont bien occupées. Enfin, deux fois par an au moins, le député rend visite à l'ensemble des maires de sa circonscription qui lui font part de leurs doléances éventuelles. A charge pour lui de défendre au mieux leurs intérêts dans la capitale.

Le Jourdain

Les règles du jeu électoral

Elles ont été fixées par l'ordonnance du 13 octobre 1958 puis modifiées en 66 et 76. Le mode de scrutin retenu est le scrutin uninominal majoritaire à deux tours. Nul n'est élu au premier tour s'il n'a recueilli la majorité absolue des suffrages exprimés et un nombre de voix égal au quart au moins du nombre des électeurs inscrits dans la circonscription. A défaut, le scrutin de ballottage a lieu le dimanche suivant. Pour être candidat au second tour, il est nécessaire d'avoir été candidat au premier tour et d'y avoir recueilli un minimum de voix : aujourd'hui, 12,5% des électeurs inscrits.

L'ordonnance du 7 novembre 1958 a institué les députés suppléants. Ils sont élus en même temps que les députés et les remplacent en cas de décès, acceptation d'une fonction gouvernementale ou de membre du Conseil constitutionnel ou prolongation au-delà de six mois d'une mission temporaire confiée par le gouvernement.



Les femmes ont obtenu le droit de vote l'année où le roi Hussein a suspendu le parlement, au début des années 70.

A la création du Royaume, la loi électorale

mise en place reprenait le modèle britannique. Le pays était divisé en circonscriptions et en raison d'une distribution démographique irrégulière, dans chacune d'elles, le nombre de députés était proportionnel à la population. Et les Jordanais disposaient d'autant de voix que de députés à élire. D'autre part, la loi réservait des sièges pour les communautés chrétienne ou circassienne ou encore tchétchène. Ainsi dans une circonscription avec cinq sièges à pourvoir, les électeurs votaient pour cinq personnes et

choisaient les candidats en lice, au moins trois musulmans, un chrétien et un circassien. Avec l'unification de la Cisjordanie en 1951, la chambre des députés fut agrandie à 120, dont 60 élus pour la Cisjordanie. On augmenta le nombre de sièges chrétiens pour faire place à des circonscriptions comme Bethlehem et Ramallah. Après la guerre de 1967, il devint impossible d'organiser des élections dans les territoires occupés, si bien qu'en 1970, le parlement élu en 1966

fut prolongé d'un deuxième mandat de quatre ans, au bout duquel le Roi Hussein suspendit le parlement. L'immunité parlementaire fut alors suspendue. Cette suspension intervint l'année même où les femmes accédèrent au droit de vote.

«L'islam est la solution»

Dix ans plus tard, en 1984 un amendement constitutionnel a permis la réactivation du parlement élu en 1980. Les députés décédés entre-temps ont été remplacés par d'autres élus lors d'élections locales en Transjordanie. Les sièges vacants de Cisjordanie furent pourvus à la suite d'un vote organisé par les députés survi-

vants de cette région.

Puis, la perte progressive des liens administratifs et légaux avec la Cisjordanie, en 1988, nécessita un deuxième amendement à la loi. Désormais, la Sénat comprendrait 40 membres et la Chambre des députés, 80 membres, dont deux sièges pour les chrétiens, deux pour les circassiens, et un siège tchétchène.

C'est dans le cadre de cette loi que se sont tenues les élections de 1989, considérées comme libres et représentatives par la presse occidentale. Le Front d'Action Islamique (FAI), le bras politique des Frères Musulmans n'y remporta pas la majorité, mais il devint tout de même le parti parlementaire le plus important, ce qui lui a permis d'occuper des postes ministériels, clés comme l'éducation, les affaires sociales et l'agriculture.

Dans ce système, il suffit dans les circonscriptions avec plusieurs sièges à pourvoir, il était possible d'échanger des blocs de votes entre candidats. Exemple : je suis le candidat du FAI et potentiellement je vais recueillir sur mon nom 2000 suffrages. A côté, il y a un candidat chrétien à peu près dans la même position. Un petit arrangement entre nous deux et hop, nous appelons chacun à voter également pour l'autre. Du coup, en plus des suffrages musulmans, je peux espérer récupérer les votes chrétiens. Le FAI a ainsi pu faire élire plus facilement ses représentants et les autres candidats qui lui étaient le plus favorables. On a entendu dans la circo-

scription de Madaba un candidat chrétien, soutenu par le FAI, mener campagne sous le slogan : «L'islam est la solution» !

Place aux tribus

Une fois que les électeurs n'eurent plus qu'un seul vote possible, ce

En effet, juste avant les élections de 1993 et pendant la relâche du parlement, le gouvernement introduisit un amendement à la loi électorale, qui donnait à chaque électeur tous les Jordanais âgés de plus de 19 ans, à l'exception des membres des Forces Armées, des agences de la sécurité, et de la défense civile) un seul vote, c'est le fameux système tant décrié aujourd'hui d'une «personne-une voix». L'amendement fut appliqué pendant les élections bien que ratifié seulement par le parlement suivant. Dans la nouvelle chambre élue, la XIIème, l'opposition a perdu beaucoup de sièges au profit des personnalités tribales, qui, au cours des quatre années suivantes, ratifièrent toutes les lois proposées par le gouvernement, notamment le traité de paix avec Israël, et furent récompensés en conséquence par des postes ministériels. Le nouveau mode de scrutin n'est pas la seule explication possible des pertes en sièges des musulmans. Pour les élections de 1989, les Frères musulmans étaient les seuls à pouvoir se vanter d'une organisation de campagne. Dans plusieurs circonscriptions, ils ont gagné parce que les votes pour

des partis traditionnels se sont éparpillés entre plusieurs candidats. Quatre ans plus tard en revanche, les tribus se sont organisées en mettant en place des listes de primaires. Elles élisent ainsi un seul candidat pour les représenter aux élections législatives, qui dans la plupart des cas remporta le scrutin.

Que reprochent exactement les partis de l'opposition au nouveau système électoral ? Premièrement, la façon dont le gouvernement l'a introduit. La constitution permet au gouvernement, en cas d'urgence, de faire passer des lois temporaires pendant la relâche parlementaire, lois qui doivent être ensuite ratifiées pendant la législature suivante. Pour l'opposition, il n'y avait pas d'urgence. Elle soupçonne les dirigeants de l'époque d'avoir agi de la sorte pour s'assurer des résultats favorables aux élections.

La contestation porte deuxièmement sur la répartition de la division inégale des sièges et des circonscriptions. Ainsi, seulement six sièges sont réservés à la circonscription de Zarqa alors que les gouvernorats de Kérak, Ma'an, Tafilah, Madaba et Ajloun représentent ensemble 12% de la population mais 21 sièges. L'opposition réclame l'augmentation du nombre de circonscriptions pour que la population de chacune soit de la même taille, ce que le gouvernement refuse obstinément.

Ali Kassay

Culture

Irbid, nouveau désert artistique

Cette année, le festival culturel d'Irbid, prévu en septembre, n'aura pas lieu. Manque d'argent, manque de matériel, manque de dialogue entre les différents partenaires. Bref, on s'ennuie ferme dans la deuxième ville du pays.

Cela saute aux yeux :

un fossé culturel sépare les deux villes du nord du royaume. D'un côté, il y a Jérash avec son festival d'été international qui lui redonne son lustre antique et de l'autre, Irbid, qui semble vivre dans l'obscurité. Il y a un an, Irbid accueillait son premier festival culturel qui était aussi le premier dans son genre. L'objectif était de raconter l'histoire de la ville connue pour sa richesse en blé. Autour de ce thème, le programme était consacré à la récolte et à la boulangerie. Mais, en raison de difficultés financières et d'organisation le festival devait être à la fois décevant et peu suivi.

Du coup, cette année, Irbid renonce à l'organisation de toutes festivités. Le directeur du département culturel de la ville, Souleiman Al-Azrai, explique : «Nous avons décidé d'incorporer les activités du festival d'Irbid dans celui d'Amman. Nous espérons ainsi favoriser la vie culturelle de ce site». Mais en réalité, il y a d'autres motifs : le succès indubitable du festival de la cité antique fréquente chaque année par des milliers de touristes. De plus, à Irbid, il existe pas de locaux spécialement équipés pour accueillir des manifestations culturelles. «L'année dernière, nous nous sommes débrouillés avec des structures réservées d'habitude à des activités sportives, regrette Yousef Ghawanneh, directeur du plus ancien et du plus important centre culturel d'Irbid et l'un des principaux organisateurs du festival, nous n'avons pas d'autre choix puisque la municipalité avait refusé de nous prêter un de ses locaux».

Un manque d'entente entre les différents acteurs de la vie culturelle, qui selon Yousef, «empêche Irbid de gagner une



Le poète Arar, décédé en 1949, était l'un des représentants les plus célèbres de la culture d'Irbid.

réputation culturelle digne de la deuxième ville de Jordanie». Les moyens financiers sont également limités. «La somme allouée par le ministère de la culture est souvent insuffisante, condamne le directeur du centre. Nous avons même parfois du mal à payer la location du bâtiment qui nous abrite».

Les manifestations culturelles restent par ailleurs limitées à Irbid : quelques soirées poétiques, des expositions et des conférences. Les artistes irbidien sont les premiers à regretter cette crise : «A mon avis, la ville connaît un vrai recul culturel, déplore le poète Abu Obeid, elle abrite près de

42 centres qui ne sont pas beaucoup aidés». Fouzi, l'écrivain Mahmoud Al-Tal, le secrétaire général du ministère de la culture, est une accusation sans fondement. Irbid est au premier rang de nos préoccupations. Il reste que les jeunes irbidien ne savent plus quoi faire pour s'occuper : «Les centres attendent que cela leur tombe tout cuit dans la bec, se désespèrent plusieurs d'entre eux. Nous n'attendons pas des miracles mais simplement de quoi étancher notre curiosité».

Nahed Al-Khloof

Retour à la case départ pour l'UNRWA

Lors de la réunion des pays donateurs à Amman, l'agence des Nations Unies a reçu des promesses d'aides suffisantes pour combler son déficit de 97. Mais l'avenir des réfugiés palestiniens dont elle a la charge n'en est pas plus souriant pour autant.

Devant l'hôtel

Fontaine Granda d'Amman, mardi dernier, soudain un cri : «Cela fait 50 ans que nous attendons quelque chose pour libérer toute la Palestine de la mer jusqu'au Jourdain, cela fait 50 ans que nous souffrons tous un jour, qu'un jour viendra nous libérer». Le libérateur, qui espère cette femme dans sa robe rouge traditionnelle de palestinienne est-il dans cet hôtel ? Sûrement pas. Dans la grande salle de réunion luxueuse du Fontaine Granda, il n'y a que les représentants des pays donateurs venus sauver une fois de plus l'UNRWA (United Nations Re-

lief Works Agency pour les réfugiés palestiniens) de la banqueroute.

Et une fois de plus, l'UNRWA a réussi à éviter le pire. Le déficit de 20 millions de dollars qui lui restait encore sur les bras pour l'exercice 97 a été comblé grâce aux promesses généreuses de certains donateurs : le Japon en tête a accordé 12,6 millions de dollars, les États-Unis, 7,5 millions, les Pays-Bas et l'Allemagne, chacun 1 million, l'Italie, 900 000 dollars et l'Espagne, un demi million de dollars.

La France, pour sa part, reste largement «à la traîne» selon

les propres termes du commissaire-général de l'UNRWA, Peter Hansen. Mardi, elle n'a en tout cas pas promis de suppléer à sa participation habituelle, de l'ordre de 3 millions de dollars quand celle de la Norvège dépasse les 11 millions.

Au bout du compte, l'UNRWA a récupéré à l'issue de cette journée capitale de quoi voir venir la fin de l'année et son commissaire général a pu annoncer l'annulation de quelques mesures drastiques et impopulaires auprès des réfugiés, que l'agence avait décriées pour empêcher l'élargissement du gouffre.

Ainsi les élèves des écoles de l'UNRWA ne seront pas soumis à des frais de scolarité. Deuxièmement, les remboursements des frais d'hospitalisation, que l'organisation menaçait de suspendre pour les deux derniers mois de l'année, seront bien assurés. Cependant, certaines décisions sont conservées : «Si nous voulons encore être capables de fournir la qualité de service nécessaire pour les 3,5 millions de réfu-

giés palestiniens dont nous avons la charge, quelques-unes des mesures annoncées le 19 août dernier doivent être maintenues», a précisé Peter Hansen. La réduction de 15% du personnel international de l'UNRWA et surtout le gel des embauches de nouveaux professeurs malgré l'augmentation croissante des étudiants seront donc appliqués dans les différents camps de la région.

On le voit, la tendance n'est pas franchement à la prodigalité. L'UNRWA, pour les années à venir, se trouve face à un casse-tête chinois. D'un côté, l'aide internationale recule. De l'autre, les besoins pour assurer ses missions d'éducation et de santé augmentent proportionnellement à la croissance de la population des camps.

L'UNRWA ne peut raisonnablement continuer sur la voie périlleuse de la réduction de ses services. Elle devrait alors le risque d'une explosion de violence dans tous les camps de réfugiés. C'est ce dont les donateurs ont tout à fait conscience. Le représentant de la France, Stanislas de Laboulaye, consul-général de Jérusalem, confiait en marge de la réunion que «les Palestiniens ne sont pas une population avec laquelle on peut jouer comme ça».

Les multiples manifestations organisées par les réfugiés dans leurs différents pays hôtes pour

protester contre les mesures d'urgence de l'UNRWA montrent la détermination des Palestiniens à ne pas laisser leur sort se décider sans eux. Le jour même de la réunion d'Amman, une délégation de Palestiniens est intervenue pour remettre une pétition à Peter Hansen dans laquelle ils soulignaient qu'une diminution des aides à l'UNRWA serait pour eux une source de frustration, et un danger pour la stabilité de la région.

C'est sans doute cet argument de la peur que Peter Hansen est souvent tenté d'utiliser pour persuader les 22 pays donateurs et d'accueillir des réfugiés de promettre toujours davantage. Le commissaire général est aussi prêt à prendre son bâton de pèlerin pour aller démarcher d'autres bienfaiteurs. Il l'a déjà fait au début de cette année dans les pays du Golfe, sans véritable succès. Mais d'autres régions du monde telles que l'Amérique latine et l'Asie du sud-est sont également au programme de ses prochaines tournées.

Au-delà des simples questions d'argent, reste le problème politique. Chacun s'accorde à dire que le statut de réfugié ne peut durer éternellement. Refusant l'idée d'une installation dans leurs pays d'accueil, les Palestiniens brandissent alors comme un épouvantail la résolution 194 des Nations unies qui leur reconnaît le droit d'être protégés et assistés ou de retourner en Palestine. Issu qui dans l'état actuel du processus de paix semble aussi improbable que l'arrivée du libérateur de la femme en rouge.

Yannick Lainé



Plus d'une centaine de réfugiés palestiniens manifestaient mardi devant l'UNRWA.

C'est la vie

L'agenda français d'Amman

Cinéma

Cycle consacré à l'acteur Michel Piccoli. Sept morts sur ordonnance, de Jacques Rouffio (1975). A quinze ans d'intervalle, deux médecins deviennent les victimes d'un professeur qui entend maintenir son autorité par tous les moyens. Lundi 15 septembre à 20h30 au Centre culturel français. Tél. : 637009/636445/612658.

Exposition

Vingt panneaux et une projection vidéo sur la radioactivité, pour tout savoir sur le phénomène découvert par Pierre et Marie Curie. Au CCF, jusqu'au 30 septembre.

Concert

Laurent de Wilde, compositeur et interprète de jazz : avec son trio, au centre culturel royal, le samedi 13 septembre à 20h30. Prix du billet : 5 JD à retirer sur place ou au CCF.

Recounting Diana's last day

By John-Thor Dahlburg

PARIS—The morning of the last day of their lives included a dip in the blue waters of the Mediterranean. The idyll under the August sun was drawing to a close, but that night they could look forward to the delights of Paris.

However, as the blond and tanned Diana, Princess of Wales, 36, and the man who had become the new love in her life, Dodi Fayed, 41, son of an Egyptian billionaire, splashed in the warm seas off the Italian island of Sardinia where his triple-deck yacht, the Jomikal, was anchored, there was an unpleasant intrusion of reality to remind them, as if they needed it, how totally different they were from other couples.

Some "paparazzi," photographers who make a living by chasing and shooting pictures of celebrities, asked them to pose for a few photos. Diana and her companion refused—and apparently got dressed down orally for it. "There were just not heavy words, but implications, curses and insults directed specifically at the princess," a witness later told a British newspaper. "It was awful."

The incident may have been their first encounter of the day with the paparazzi, but it would not be the last. And before the next day dawned, Diana, and the man who reportedly was hoping to marry the divorced wife of Prince Charles, the heir to the British throne, were both dead.

After lunchtime that Saturday, the couple boarded a private jet at an airport in the north of Sardinia, a rocky island south of Corsica. About an hour and a half later, they landed at Le Bourget north of Paris. On the tarmac to greet Diana and Fayed was the No. 2 security guard from the Ritz Hotel, the short and balding Henri Paul, 41, who, in addition to the paparazzi, was to play a pivotal role in the tragedy that had begun to unfold.

According to police sources, film confiscated from photographers who took pictures of the car in which Diana died show that paparazzi were on to the couple as soon as they touched down at Le Bourget. By 5 pm, as many as 30 had gathered outside the Ritz, a hotel owned by Fayed's father.

Photographers' determination to get a picture was whetted by the astronomical prices—up to \$5 million, according to trade gossip—feared by a grainy shot taken by one of their colleagues that was the first photographed embrace between Diana and Fayed.

The new love interest in the princess' life was a millionaire playboy and film

producer whose father owns, along with the Ritz, Harrods department store in London and other exclusive properties.

After Dodi arrived in Paris, he was thinking out loud with a relative about the months to come. Apparently he was planning to propose to Diana. At 8:45 pm Dodi phoned a cousin, Hussein Yassin, a Saudi businessman who works for oil companies, the relative says. "I asked him bluntly," Yassin recounted in a newspaper interview. "I said, 'Dodi, are you very serious about this relationship?' And he said, 'We are very serious.'"

"So I said, well, you know, you should make it easy for yourselves and announce an engagement, that you are going to get married." And he said, "We are going to. We are going to get married."

When he had arrived in Paris, Fayed had dropped in at Repossi's, an exclusive jeweler on the Place Vendôme opposite the Ritz. He picked up a ring, Repossi spokeswoman Alice Valentin confirmed. She declined to divulge further details. But The Sun, Britain's biggest tabloid, said it was a diamond ring worth more than \$200,000, and quoted jeweler Alberto Repossi himself as saying Dodi had ordered a ring unlike any other and confided he wanted to "spend the rest of his life" with Diana.

On Saturday, after dodging photographers near the Champs-Élysées, where Dodi has an apartment, the pair showed up at the Ritz around 10 pm, two bodyguards running interference through a clutch of photographers. Fayed's father later said his son and Diana weren't expected; according to some reports, they were planning to dine at a chic bistro in a trendy neighborhood near the Centre Pompidou hut gave up because of the pressure from paparazzi.

Outside the Ritz were the photographers, their gaze riveted on the Ritz's main doorway. Paul, who went off duty earlier in the evening, when it seemed that Diana and Fayed wouldn't be returning, was called back in. He returned in his own car at about 10 pm, according to security-camera footage released by Harrods.

Police tests later would show that the weekend pilot and former officer candidate in the French Air Force had been drinking, and was carrying more than three times the lawful level of alcohol in his blood. The hotel said no one detected the smell of liquor on the security guard's breath, or any other signs of intoxication. The armored Mercedes and driver they had used earlier, as well as an accompanying Range Rover, would exit the Ritz to try to trick photographers into heading off in a different direction.

At 12:20 am, Sunday, Aug. 31, the security-camera videotape shows Diana, Dodi and Paul walking to the service entrance of

the Ritz. Fayed slipped his arm around Diana. A photographer was there to snap the scene as the princess exited the hotel. Along with a bodyguard, Paul and his passengers climbed into a black 1994 Mercedes-Benz 280-S, a two-ton sedan with a 197-horsepower engine.

But the ploy to outwit the paparazzi had failed. As they pulled away from the Ritz, a number of photographers gave chase on motorcycles and scooters. The limo swung into Paris' central Place de la Concorde, then bore right for the expressway that parallels the Seine and runs west toward the city's exclusive 16th district. That route, too, seems to have been meant as a deception. For Diana and Fayed were not bound for the 16th at all, where the Egyptian's father is the owner of the former residence of the Duke and Duchess of Windsor on the fringes of the leafy Bois de Boulogne, but for Dodi's apartment near the Arc de Triomphe.

Evidently, the plan was to use the tree-lined expressway, where there are no traffic lights to slow the Mercedes down, to shake the paparazzi and then change course. East of the busy Place de l'Alma, the road dips and makes a sudden head to the left into an underpass. Film seized after the accident by police clearly shows photographers at one point around the Mercedes, and Paul tugging down the sun visor as if to prevent himself from being blinded by the photographer's flashbulbs.

A motorist from Normandy driving in front of Paul has said that in his rear view mirror, he saw a motorcycle carrying two people swerve into the path of the Mercedes. Witness accounts concur that Paul was speeding: one initial police estimate talks of a possible 121 mph in a 30-mph zone. He hit the brakes hard enough to leave a slick of rubber more than 50 feet long, an action that likely would have made Dodi and Diana, whose seat belts were not fastened, lurch forward.

But the heavy sedan ran head-on into a square concrete pillar. Wrenched to the right with tremendous force, the vehicle careened into a brick-lined wall, rebounded, and shattered to a stop in the slow lane, the horn blaring and the smashed-in front end pointing in the direction from which the car came. Dodi and Paul were dead.

A security guard riding in the front seat, Trevor Rees-Jones, 29, a former British paratrooper, apparently was saved by the passenger-side air bag, but his face had crashed through the windshield on impact.

A physician, Dr. Frederic Mailliez, 38, was at the wheel of a vehicle belonging to SOS-Médecins, a medical charity, and traveling in the tunnel in the opposite direction.



Princess Diana leaving the Ritz Hotel in Paris on the fateful night of the accident

He may have been the first witness at the accident scene.

"I helped a passenger in the front seat, who turned out to be the bodyguard, and I helped a young woman behind who was Lady Di, but I didn't recognize her," the doctor said later. "She was like this [Mailliez lowered his chin onto his chest] and she was unconscious."

"She was moaning and gesturing in every direction, and in that position, when you are unconscious, you can't breathe. So I lifted her head up and helped her breathe with an oxygen mask."

The Paris fire brigade got an emergency call at 12:27 am, apparently from one of the photographers trailing Diana. Meanwhile, a number of men with cameras swarmed around the wreckage "as though they were mosquitoes," said eyewitness Jack Firestone, 42, a visiting tourist from New York. "There was no movement of one human being trying to help another human being."

Helicopters arrived at the scene in minutes. But it now appears that they may

have neglected to alert the SAMU, or emergency medical services. The SAMU learned of the car wreck in a separate call from a witness at the scene and, according to some reports, 10 minutes went by during which dispatchers verified that it was not a bogus alarm.

When they finally arrived in the pale, artificial light of the underpass, SAMU paramedics got to work on Diana. For 30 minutes, they gave her painkillers and tried to treat her wounds. The initial diagnosis was "not catastrophic," a rescue official remembered: head trauma, multiple fractures to a shoulder and thigh. The princess also had regained at least a state of semi-consciousness, said a few words and seemed confused and agitated.

Her most grievous wounds were hidden: massive bleeding from internal injuries. The princess was rushed to La Pitié-Salpêtrière hospital, one of the French capital's largest, about four miles away on the Left Bank.

It was now five minutes past 2 am, and doctors at La Pitié-Salpêtrière found

Diana was suffering from massive chest injuries and bleeding. She went into cardiac arrest soon after arrival. Blood—more than 20 pints, by one count—was transfused into her. Doctors bore a hole in her left pulmonary vein. The tear in the vital blood vessel was mended.

For two hours, Diana's unresponsive heart, which had stopped beating on its own due to massive blood loss in her chest, was given urgent outside stimulation, by electric shock and manually. "With these kinds of injuries, heroic measures are called for but are very rarely successful," said Dr. Alistair Wilson, a British emergency surgeon.

About 3 hours after the crash, physicians decided nothing more could be done. At 4 am, a doctor at the hospital, with the French interior minister by his side, announced that Princess Diana was dead. The hospital chaplain, a Roman Catholic priest, prayed over Diana's body.

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

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INTERNET SPECIAL

THE STAR'S

COMPUTING & HIGH TECH

Edited by Zeid Nasser

Apple's new Mac operating system, Rhapsody: Inter-'face' lift needed

By Jahra Ghneim

Special to The Star
FEW DISAGREE about the specifications of hardware and operating systems configurations that will serve computer users three to six years from now. It is expected that 32-bit, and maybe 64-bit, operating systems will be the standard. They will definitely be multi-tasking and multi-threading. Future operating systems will also be scalable, supporting multiprocessing, giving users an unprecedented speed and efficiency.

Most importantly, all future operating systems and computer hardware will have solid networking capabilities built-in. A look at operating systems under construction now, such as the BeOS, Rhapsody, NT 5.0, and

even new versions of the Unix operating system such as the Plan-9, will confirm this trend.

With all these operating systems promising a high level of performance and stability, it should be difficult in picking the operating system that is most suitable for you.

Add to this the fact that all of these operating systems will be able to run cross and multi platform programs using engines such as the Java Virtual machines, which seem to be incorporated

in every new version or release of an operating system.

So, one might ask, what will be the criteria upon which users will lean to choose an OS?

One answer might be the number of applications available for the platform, or the industry's support for it.

The availability of rapid application development tools RAD promise to ease programming and increase the number of applications available. Apart from all these points, the fact remains that what will make or break OS's in the future is the

user interface. New OS's are incorporating web technologies into the heart of the user interface. Microsoft has embedded its browser so deep into the new release of its new OS that you can't tell the difference between the browser and the desktop.

Communicator, the new version of Netscape Navigator does almost the same thing. Within a year, you will use an OS that has built-in GroupWare products that allow you to cooperate with co-workers and share schedules with them via the web. You will browse your hard disk in the same way you browse the Internet. In addition, your desktop will have embedded applications (most probably written in Java) and content from the net or your local network will be available to you using PUSH software. Users will also be able to have access to their desktops from any machine on the network, which is a feature supported operating systems and shells like Rhapsody and HotJava Views.

It seems that this general design has become the standard. We still have to wait and see which particular design will rule.

With all the content that is being literally pushed at us through the Internet, we need a user interface that represents more than a cosmetic surgery to the current design. We need something more solid we can interface with, something that can save us the trouble of looking through the megabytes of data we accumulate every week. In addition the system should be able to index all of this information in a searchable form.

Some may say that this is the function of utility programs, however it should be built right into the OS. These services are as essential as the file manager or the finder. The BeOS adopts such an approach where all files are indexed and can be found and classified according to subjects or any other criteria. This enables users to track all files relating to a specific subject. It is definitely easier than searching for a file name or a keyword. Also in the works, is a user interface called Lifestream. Lifestream organizes files chronologically, allowing users to track files according to their order in the stream.

In short, interfaces need to be intuitive, simple, and should allow you to find whatever you need fast, and above all they need to be easy to learn.

I believe that none of the operating systems today match all of these criteria. If some OS can match these criteria, then its worth throwing away all our current OS's and shifting to such a new OS. A new and useful user interface is more than a demand, it is a necessity.

Email: GhneimJ@go.co.jo

Computer & IT companies

Welcome to The Star's Workstation, the absolute state-of-the-art on what's hot and what's not in Jordan's IT market. Fax us on 644228 or email us at: StarNETS@com.jo with your news and views.

Providing 'Pay As You Use' packages: NETS 'Ramps-On' to the Internet

BBS1
NETS is the third company to offer Internet on-line services in Jordan, following Global One and INDEX. Naturally, in a new competitive environment, NETS also has many surprises in its pricing plans.

For starters, the basic rate for an hour on the Internet is offered at JD 1.60, and users can utilize very few hours every month, thanks to the 'Pay As You Use' system that NETS applies. This system is a true achievement in programming terms, especially seeing as NETS had to build the integration between its BBS and the Internet completely by itself—without depending on external help. The result is a 'Ramp On' system similar to that of great service providers worldwide like America On Line.

What basically happens is that users logged into NETS have the option to go into the BBS, at no extra cost as they have already paid their subscription fees, or they can jump onto the Internet with the click of an icon that reads 'Internet Gateway'. Immediately, and without the need to dial up a separate number, you can start surfing. What's more, by simply going back to the BBS, exiting the Internet, the system realizes that you are no longer on-line and bills you only for the time you spent. Hopping on and off is actually no need to pre-pay every month for Internet use, as you can settle your account at the end of the month based on how long you chose to use the service!

For users who prefer to pre-pay for their Internet activities, and who are not NETS BBS subscribers, their are pricing plans which are quite competitive. As is the case with Index



and Global One, packages start from 6 hours a month and go all the way up to unlimited access, all throughout the month, for a sum as little as JD 90.

"To provide every user with his/her need, we are offering both 'pay as you use' and pre-payment for hours schemes," said Mr Marwan Juma, general manager of NETS.

"We realize that there is a huge potential for Internet on-line services in Jordan, and with dropping prices we expect many more users to go on-line, but we also understand that certain users are more price conscious than others," added Mr. Juma, "that's why we provide something for everyone."

For more information on NETS on-line and Internet services, contact the Sales Department on telephone 5510101.

INTERFACE

BY ZEID NASSER

Do you have a headache?

SOMETIMES, AMIDST our rush to adopt all that is new in technology, we seem to disregard an important factor: tension and physical harm that could affect us as computer users.

According to scientists and researchers who advocate 'healthy computing', there are so many side effects to intensive computer use. Now, we all know about the eye-strain resulting from looking into a computer screen all day, and we are also aware of the harm caused by our postures from unsuitable seating and awkward positioning of computer equipment on desks; but have you ever stopped to wonder about noise pollution caused by a humming computer fan, the general noisiness of clicking away at a computer keyboard?

Actually, reports show that the 'noise pollution' caused by computers is equivalent to that of a 'conversation'. In other words, the stress on your ear and your senses is general is very similar!

Many computer manufacturers are already responding to this issue, by introducing silent computers. A good example is the new AST Bravo MS system. Measured in noise units, this system was found to decrease the noise of a typical Pentium PC by about 70 percent. Adding to that a quiet, eco-friendly monitor that dissipates little heat, and a 'silent click' keyboard; you will feel a world of difference.

Personally, I can understand this argument. Almost every room I walk into that has running computers suffers from all these noises, most prominent of which is the annoying, humming sound of power generators or fans, monitors, and over heated computers!

Come to think of it, most of us should take time off away from our computers to hear the sounds of nature, a quiet afternoon or evening in the not so distant countryside should provide a shocking realization, that our bodies are being 'polluted' with excessive noise, 'clicks' and all sorts of strain!

Soon, computer manufacturers and users alike will realize the importance of a more healthy work place. That's when using our computers will become as a seamless task as watching roses grow in your garden! Just imagine how beautiful that could be!



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JCS announces plans for METS '97

PREPARATIONS ARE underway for the Middle East Technology Show (METS) '97 to be held in Amman on 11 November, 1997.

METS is an annual event that brings together companies from the information technology and computer sectors, and is the largest event of its kind in the country; with well over thirty participating companies and visitors exceeding 15,000 computer enthusiasts and professionals.

It is organized by the Jordan Computer Society (JCS), who works hard every year to introduce improved services and facilities for exhibiting companies.

This year, the show is being held under the slogan "Information Technology Solutions", and is expected to focus on Jordanian software development companies whose skills and quality products are penetrating

the whole region. Also, you can expect to see a lot of activity among Internet Service Providing companies as the Internet scene in the country is heating up, towards the end of this year.

Mr Hussein Sisan, chairman of the METS '97 organizing committee at the JCS, stated that this year's show is expected to attract a large number of participants, and will be fully serviced to the benefit of exhibitors and visitors.

Already, around one thousand and three hundred square meters of space have been booked this year, and the main sponsors of the show have been announced: IByte Middle East, Arabia On Line, Computer, Networking Services, Access, Aramex, T.E.N. and Fun Directory.

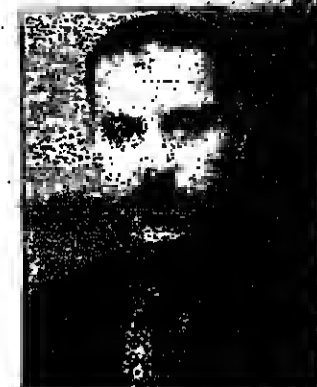
Mr Sisan also stated that there were on-going talks with representatives of the Palestin-

ian Chamber of Commerce to explore the possibilities of having a special pavilion at METS '97 for Palestinian computer and information technology companies.

As for transport arrangements, the organizers will ensure free transport by bus from the Seventh Circle area to and from the exhibition location. Security facilities are also taken care of with upgraded services, offered by a specialized security company.

Concerning the promotion campaign, there will be advertising for the show in the local Arabic and English press, and in Middle Eastern magazines. Also, television and radio will be used to promote the event.

This year, METS '97 will also have a comprehensive Website. All in all, METS is an opportunity that should not be missed by companies seeking an excellent promotional oppor-



Mr Hussein Sisan, from the METS '97 organizing committee

lunity. After all, it only takes place once a year.

For more information on METS '97, contact the Jordan Computer Society (JCS) on telephone 683349.

England World Cup plans haunted by Diana tragedy

LONDON—England manager Glenn Hoddle admits he is not sure what sort of atmosphere his team will stride out to at Wembley for Wednesday's World Cup qualifier against Moldova.

A nation still in mourning for Diana, Princess of Wales, will demand a suitable tribute from England's first international since the tragedy of her death.

But Hoddle's men must get their heads down to the task in hand and pick up the three points against Moldova which will keep alive their hopes of coming from behind to pip Italy for group two victory.

And the coach is aware that the balancing act must be right both on and off the pitch if England are to remain on World Cup track in front of a sellout crowd of 75,000.

"I don't know what the atmosphere and emotion will be like," said Hoddle. "I'm not sure and I don't think anybody can be."

"I'm sure a lot of people all round the world will be watching that game. So it's a question of sensing the mood."

"No-one can actually say how we'll find things. The atmosphere will be there and will unfold but you can't pre-judge what the mood will be like."

Undoubtedly there will be a sombre edge to the occasion, and while Elton John, invited to sing the National Anthem, is on duty overseas, his newly-released tribute recording of "Candle in the Wind" is likely to be played to the crowd.

There are fears, however, that by playing the record the game might unwittingly be trans-

formed more into a wake, and there would be obvious problems in following Elton's heartfelt words with the now-obligatory "Three Lions".

Hoddle, however, feels the tribute record should be played. "It wouldn't be when the players were anywhere near," said the coach.

"We'll be wearing a black ribbon or an armband. We've had a chat and the boys have decided to donate their match fees to the Princess's charity."

"There is another aspect. There might be people who aren't aware of the record and this would let them know it was going to be available. 75,000 there might go and buy it. It would be a way of starting to sell it."

"But we know that people will be looking for a positive atmosphere as well. And there's a job to be done, no two ways about it."

"Many people had to go back to work yesterday morning. We've got to do it tomorrow, put our professional head on."

and get the three points that are there. Hoddle added: "We have to lift people by putting on a performance to win a match, because we have to get three points so we can go to Rome to win the group."

"That's what the professional head tells us. Whether we win 1-0 or 7-0, winning the game is the bottom line."

"The icing on the cake would be to perform really well and get people off their seats and cheering England on."

"We know the nation will be coming together again, if for a completely different reason to last weekend. It's one that hopefully will lift people."

"If something positive can happen in the game, maybe a goal after two minutes, it could go through the roof."

"We want to get people off their seats and realise there's a game of football on. It's got to be like that. For 90 minutes everybody, the players, the manager and the crowd have got to put on a professional face."

"That tragic event is still there, we've got to get back to doing our job and our business."

Moldova have agreed to wear black ribbons sewn into their shirts.

Moldova coach Caras said: "The world is grieving the loss of Diana. We express shock and sense of grief for Diana."

Caras added: "We are facing one of the strongest teams in world soccer. This is one of the toughest — if not the toughest — groups in the qualifying round."

It is a tremendous opportunity to learn and gain experience."

Moldova have lost five of their group games so far, scoring two goals and conceding 13.



England team.

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INSIDE

The Dinka of Sudan, page

Summer festival at the Darat, page

Weekend, Paparazzi culture, page

Weekend, Paparazzi culture, page